

6-1-1989

Evangelical Visitor - June, 1989 Vol. 103. No. 6.

Glen A. Pierce

Follow this and additional works at: <https://mosaic.messiah.edu/evanvisitor>Part of the [History of Religion Commons](#), and the [Religion Commons](#)Permanent URL: <https://mosaic.messiah.edu/evanvisitor/2540>**Recommended Citation**Pierce, Glen A., "Evangelical Visitor - June, 1989 Vol. 103. No. 6." (1989). *Evangelical Visitor (1887-1999)*. 2540.<https://mosaic.messiah.edu/evanvisitor/2540>

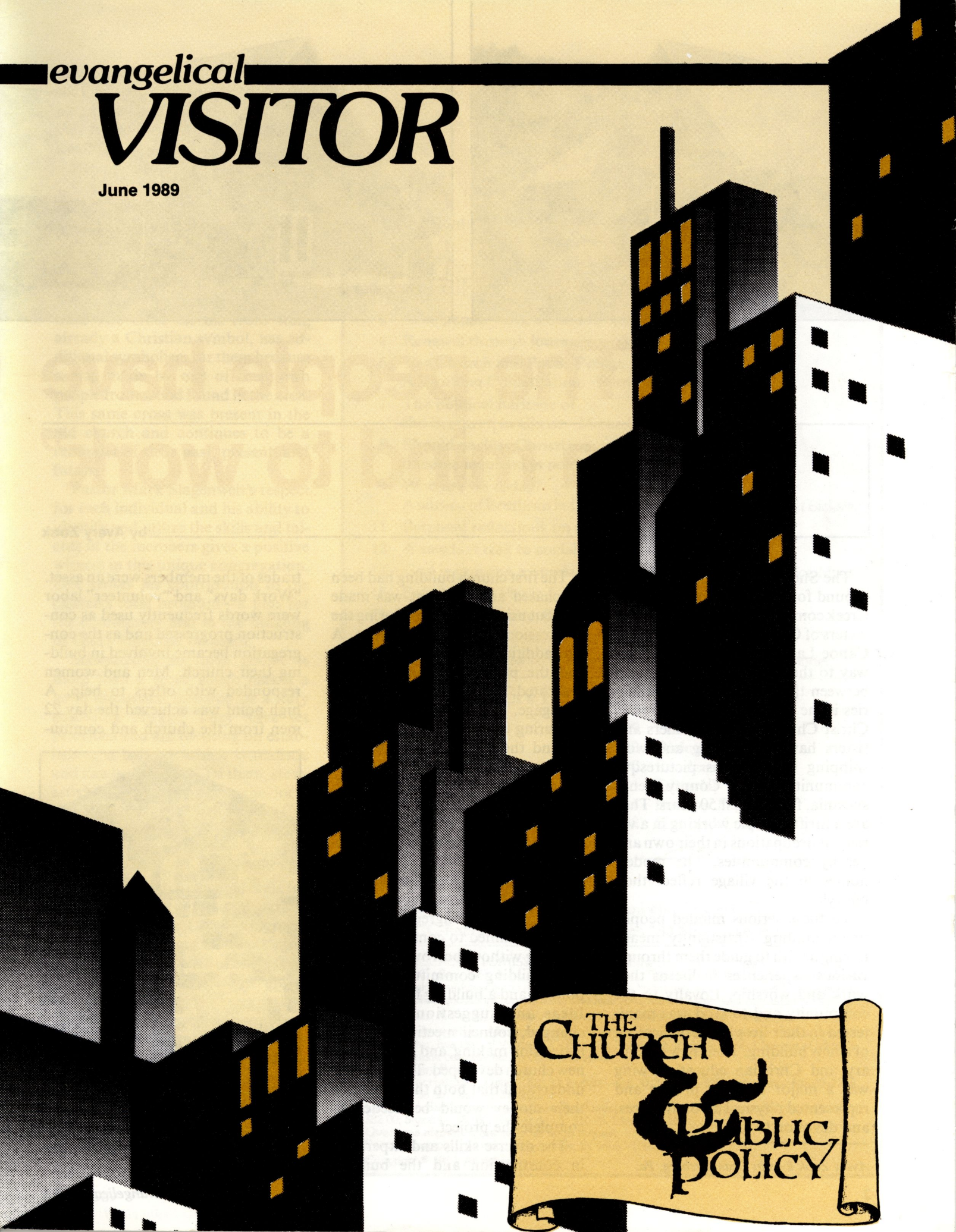
Sharpening Intellect | Deepening Christian Faith | Inspiring Action

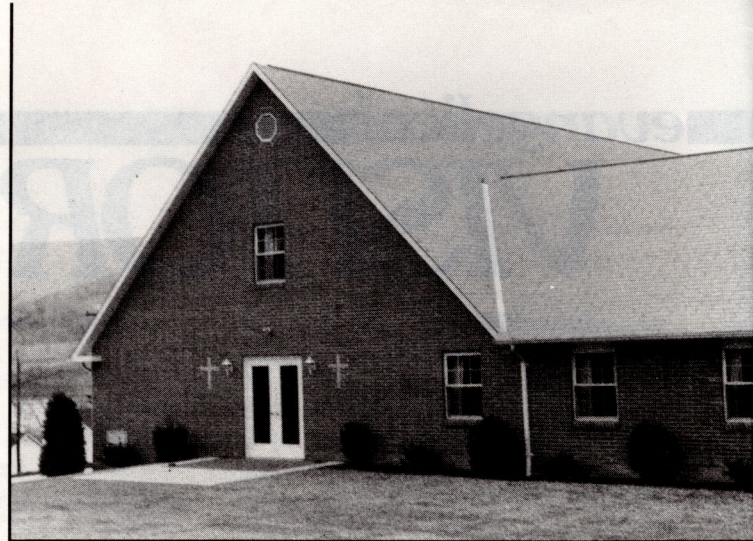
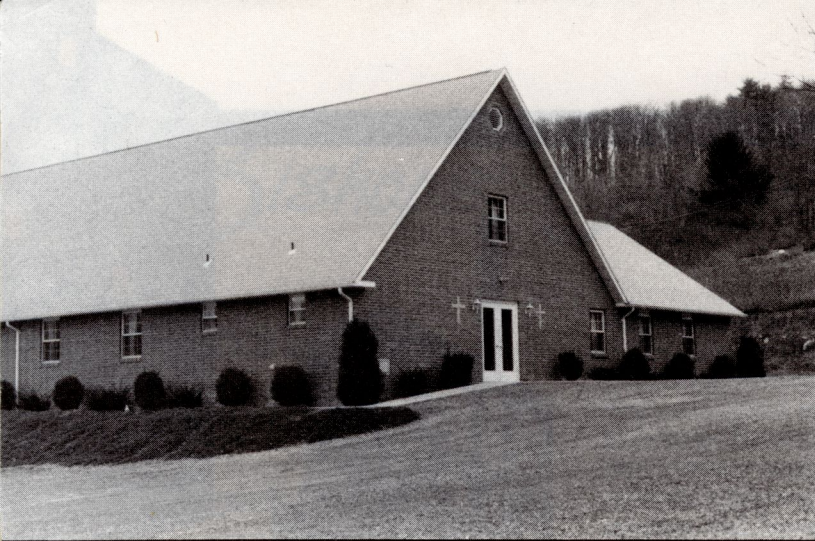
Messiah University is a Christian university of the liberal and applied arts and sciences. Our mission is to educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society.

evangelical

VISITOR

June 1989





“The people have a mind to work”

by Avery Zook

The Short Mountain is the background for the people of the Canoe Creek community, while the rippling waters of Canoe Creek flow through Canoe Lake and continue on their way to the Juniata River. Nestled between these two natural boundaries is the Canoe Creek Brethren in Christ Church. These brothers and sisters have been living and worshipping God in this picturesque community in Blair County, Pennsylvania, for the past 50 years. They are a thrifty people working in a variety of occupations in their own and nearby communities. The modest homes in the village reflect their lifestyle.

To these serious minded people, understanding Christianity means having a faith to guide them through various experiences in life as they work and worship. Loyalty to the community and to God was manifested in their lives at the dedication of a new building. Their new sanctuary and Christian education wing was a major building project and represented physical labor, finances, and devotion to God.

Avery Zook lives in Chambersburg, Pa.

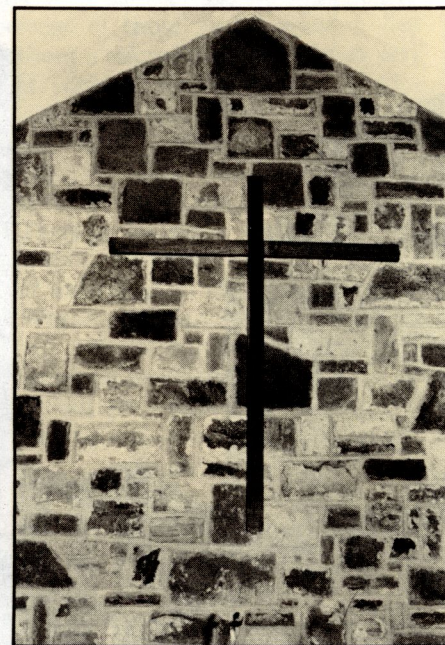
The first church building had been purchased and payment was made without using a mortgage during the Depression years of the 1930s. A later addition was made to the church and the parsonage was built and dedicated, also without benefit of a mortgage.

During the 1970s the need to expand the physical plant became apparent. The people at the Canoe Creek Church talked, planned, prayed, and attempted to find the kind of facility they needed. It became clear to them that the practical solution was to build a new church a short distance from the original church. A crucial question was answered for the congregation when they determined to construct a new building without borrowing money.

A building committee was appointed and a building fund started. Ideas and suggestions were exchanged, council meetings resulted in decision making, and plans for the new church developed. The members understood that both their time and their money would be needed to complete the project.

The diverse skills and experience in construction and the building

trades of the members were an asset. “Work days” and “volunteer” labor were words frequently used as construction progressed and as the congregation became involved in building their church. Men and women responded with offers to help. A high point was achieved the day 22 men from the church and commu-



Local materials were used for the cross and stone wall.

nity placed the roof trusses. Unity took on new meaning for these people as they had a mind to work and they found themselves growing spiritually as they worked together and worshipped together.

The wall at the front of the sanctuary has two features that distinguish their church as the Canoe Creek Brethren in Christ Church. The stones in the wall were gathered from the general area and laid by a mason from within the congregation. The cross on the front wall, already a Christian symbol, has additional symbolism for them because it was made by one of their own people from wood found in the area. This same cross was present in the old church and continues to be a reminder of their past, present, and future.

Pastor Mark Slagenweit's respect for each individual and his ability to identify and utilize the skills and talents of the members gives a positive witness in this unique congregation. One senses his contribution to the church's total program—a plus for the community and in the building of God's kingdom on earth.

Stewardship to these people is more than a word which makes a good discussion question or a lofty sounding phrase. They have set priorities and are focusing on establishing a balance which is realistic and can be achieved. To them, stewardship means giving to the local church program, and supporting Cooperative Ministries which includes their strong interest in Brethren in Christ missions. Stewardship also means providing time and funds for the Canoe Creek building program.

For the Canoe Creek congregation, the use of promotional campaigns was not a part of their fund raising strategy. Consistent giving over an eight year period meant their financial needs were being supplied. The practice continues to the present time as the old building and parsonage undergo extensive renovations. The people have a mind to work. They remain a good example of forethought, well-laid plans, willingness to work for the church, and of dedication to God. ■

evangelical VISITOR

The official publication of the Brethren in Christ Church

June 1989

Vol. 103, No. 6

FEATURES

- 2 "The people have a mind to work" Avery Zook
- 4 Renewal through journaling John Reitz
- 6 The Church and Public Policy:
A Working Consultation Harriet Bicksler
- 7 The political heritage of
the Brethren in Christ Martin Schrag and E. Morris Sider
- 8 Should pacifist Christians
become involved in politics? Ronald J. Sider
- 9 Who are we today?
A survey of Brethren in Christ political attitudes Harriet Bicksler
- 11 Personal reflections on the consultation
- 12 A sawdust trail to social reform Wally Kroeker
- 14 God is growing a Sunday school at Summit View Janice Myer
- 15 Safari Club Phyllis J. Lehman
- 16 Missions = Vitality; (Part II) Harvey R. Sider
- 17 Just a vessel Zoltan Kiraly
- 19 "You can go nowhere where Jesus is not" Henry A. Ginder

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 20 God at work in our world | 29 Onesimus |
| 22 Church News | 30 Dialogue |
| 24 Money Matters | 30 Readers Respond |
| 26 The JEF Series: | 31 Editorial |
| A ministry of service | 31 Pontius' Puddle |
| 27 Messiah College News | 32 Bishops' Column |
| 28 Phoebe's Journal | |

NEWS

- 21 Zambia peace seminar focuses on church's role
- 21 MCC-financed corn grinder helps 160 Mexican families

EVANGELICAL VISITOR (ISSN 0745-0486) is published monthly by Evangel Press, 301 N. Elm Street (P.O. Box 166), Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Telephone (219) 773-3164. Member of Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse, a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New International Version.

Editor: Glen A. Pierce; Editorial Assistant: Helen Johns; Circulation: Phyllis Lentz

Mailing Information: All correspondence, manuscripts and subscriptions should be addressed to the Editor, Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Changes of address should include both the old and new addresses.

Single Copy Price: \$1.00 U.S.

U.S. Subscriptions: 1 year—\$10.00; 2 years—\$18.00; 3 years—\$25.00; 5 years—\$40.00. New and Gift: \$8.50. Lifetime: \$150.00.

Canadian Subscriptions (in Canadian funds): 1 year—\$12.00; 2 years—\$22.00; 3 years—\$32.00; 5 years—\$50.00. New and Gift: \$10.25. Lifetime: \$185.00.

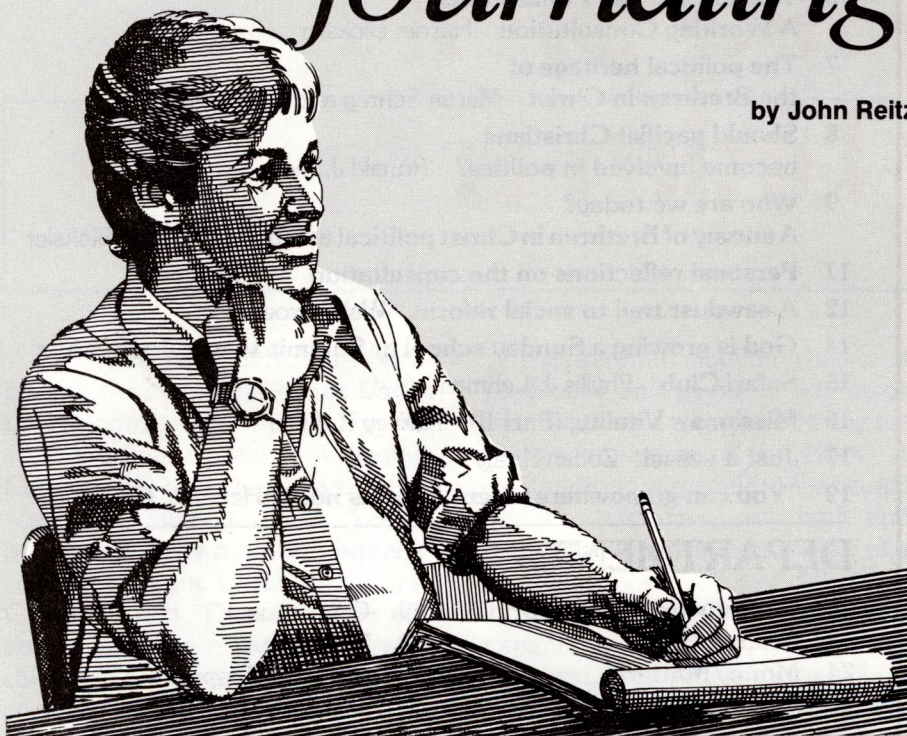
Overseas airmail rates available upon request.

Second-class postage paid at Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Printed in U.S.A.

Copyright © 1989. All rights reserved.

Renewal through journaling

by John Reitz



One of the modern catchwords of the Brethren in Christ community is the word *renewal*. General Conference has talked of Renewal 2000, local congregations are experiencing renewal, and each person is being encouraged to catch the spirit of renewal. The word itself means "to give new spiritual strength to, to reestablish, to make new again."

Catchwords only get our attention—they do not tell the whole story. Other words have been used

throughout Brethren in Christ history to express a need that has always been part of our church's experience. The theological roots of the family tree shed light on the discussion of renewal. The pietistic influence that has been assimilated into our life has left us with a unique distinction. We are a people who desire to react against the status quo, who encourage a meaningful, heartfelt relationship with God, and who aspire to spiritual ideals. As long as we use the fabric of our pietistic influence to clothe ourselves, there will be a recognizable thread of reform no matter what the style or pattern of the garment.

Relationships of any kind are

either growing and being renewed, or else they are becoming status quo. Our relationship with God is not much different. It has been my experience to travel in both directions, often without even recognizing it. I testify to you that any renewal that I have experienced in my life has been brought about by the grace of God. I am becoming more aware of the soft music of God's grace in my life and have realized its soothing effect upon me.

One of the greatest tools that God has used to soften my heart and renew my faith has been the instrument of writing. The early seed of communicating what I was experiencing and feeling was planted at the time of my father's death. I am convinced that there is a creativity that is trapped within each of us, and suffering and deprivation often become the channel for its expression. Writing became an avenue to express my faith and renew my commitment to a God who journeyed with me through my darkest hour. A felt need is an important aspect of renewal.

To my detriment, the writing lasted for only a season and soon dissipated as the intensity of my pain subsided. In retrospect, I can see that this was only seedtime and not harvest. Germinating within my life was a garden of discovery which would bring forth a harvest of spiritual development.

It is a revealed truth that God speaks in many portions and in many ways. Translated in my life, this meant God would use my daughter's first grade school teacher. She became instrumental in helping me conceptualize what became the greatest discovery to this point in my spiritual development. Throughout the school year, she had asked each child to keep a journal. The experience of keeping a journal was not new to me but her words of direction to a first grade class opened a gateway that had been closed for years.

She gave three guidelines. First, the journal was their own and each

John Reitz is the pastor of the Skyline View Brethren in Christ Church in Harrisburg, Pa.

entry was to be about their life, not about what they had learned in school. Secondly, they were to write whatever they felt like writing, rather than what they thought she wanted. The third guideline was that there would be no need to use correct grammar or proper spelling. When asked how to spell a word, she would have them write it as it sounded. (You can imagine the fun of reading such a journal.) As my daughter discussed this project with me I could tell she was looking forward to a school assignment which seemed to break the rules of "needing to do it the right way." Then it struck me, Scripture says, "unless you turn and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

For years, spiritual disciplines were always things that I knew I should do. Perceived standards enveloped a heartfelt desire that I was experiencing. Aspects of spiritual development had become instruments of destruction rather than renewal. I had become tired of relating to God in ways that always left me falling short. The third chapter of 2 Corinthians came to life for me and it made the difference between experiencing renewal rather than maintaining the status quo. "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

The words of a teacher combined with a desire to grow in grace gave me a new opportunity for growth. I made a commitment to God and myself that writing in a journal would be done without any rules or expectations. Journaling became for me an avenue for renewal because I exchanged the laws of bondage for freedom of expression. My entries are marked by personal sharing with the God I love. On the pages one would find prayers of confession and praise, meditations on a wide range of subjects, and even poetry and hymns written in praise of God's goodness. There is no standard for making entries. At times, dates show writings for a couple of days in a row, and at other times, one might not find an entry for a month.

To my surprise, journaling has become my favorite aspect of spiritual development. The key is that there is no way that I could possibly fail. I am indebted to a first grade teacher who knew something about kids and their need for creativity. God used her to help me lessen some of my adult standards in order to approach God as the creative child that I am.

There is no way that I can fully express the satisfaction that I have experienced through journaling. However, let me share three aspects that have been greatly rewarding to me.

One of the rewards of journaling is that it gives a tangible way of remembering what God has done in our lives. I am impressed with God's concern for people to remember past events. He has used covenants, stones set up as memorials, passover meals, shewbread, and a host of other tangible symbols of his grace towards people. You do not need to look far in the biblical record to find that whenever God's people experienced "status quo" religion, they had disconnected from their salvation story. I am finding through writing down personal encounters with God that I am remembering my life of grace much better. Even if journaling is not something you choose to do, let me encourage you to write down your thoughts at significant stages in your life. In life as well as in journaling, you cannot live on yesterday's manna. However, it is significant that the children of Israel were to keep shewbread as a reminder of what God has done in the past.

Another reward of journaling is that I have found an avenue of spiritual development that fits who I am as a person. My personality preference is introversion which means that I internally process most of what goes on in my life. Writing has opened up an avenue by which I can express what is most strongly felt. My journal is a personal attempt to draw back the curtain that naturally falls over the stage of my heart.

Through the use of a pen and paper, words are communicated that might never leave my inner person by any other way. I have a renewed sense of openness before God and before others.

Journaling also helps me accomplish a goal of guiding the next generation. As a parent, I realize that days lived in a family rapidly turn to years, and soon most, if not all, we have is memory. A few years ago, I made up a life motto: "Plan for the future, while living fully in the present, so as not to regret the past." Keeping some record of personal faith is one of the ways I have operationalized that statement. In future years as my children turn the pages of worn journals, they will know what was most important to me. They will know that their dad never outgrew his need for confession of sin and acceptance of forgiveness. Along with many other entries, they will discover my prayer for them on the first day of school. Another page will tell the story of a family visit to the grave of their maternal grandfather whom they never knew. The written word endures and affects people longer than one would ever imagine.

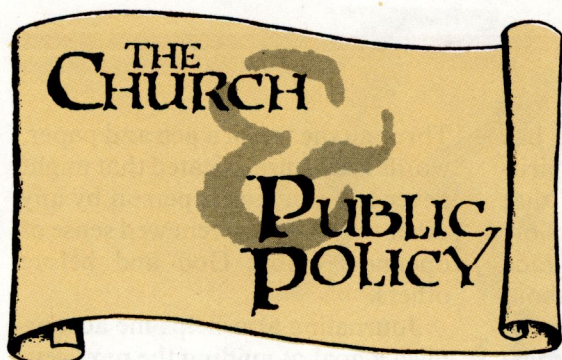
In closing, let me share with you a prayer that comes from the pages of my journal.

Teach me the way of devotion;
Control my mind by your Spirit;
Occupy my time with pure thoughts;
Softens my heart by your inner presence;
Lead my feet on a pilgrim's journey.

If I am left to myself, I become a garden without a gardener. No one to care for my nourishment and no one to protect me from the strangling weeds that so easily crowd my life.

Father, work in my garden:

- cutting the soil
- pruning the branches
- keeping me moist
- even transplant me if it means better growth for you.



A Working Consultation

Reported by
Harriet Bicksler

At 8:30 on Tuesday morning, April 4, about 60 people gathered on the campus of Messiah College to begin the Consultation on the Church and Public Policy. The event, co-sponsored by the college and the Board for Brotherhood Concerns, was billed as "an opportunity for those interested in the church's role in influencing public policy to discuss ideas, concerns, and strategies." Most of the participants were from Pennsylvania, but there were also representatives from Canada, the District of Columbia, Ohio, New York, California, Virginia, Indiana, Oklahoma, and Kansas. We were all welcomed by Arlene Miller, the convenor of the Consultation planning committee. Arlene described her dream that this would be the first of many similar collaborations between Messiah College and the Brethren in Christ Church, and thanked college personnel and planning committee members for all their help in planning the consultation.

Lenora Stern, chairperson of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns, one of the co-sponsors, welcomed each person to this "working consultation." Speaking from the perspective of someone working in state government, she said that she needs the church to help her in the formation of public policy and that she had made an intentional choice to influence public policy toward Christian values. On behalf of Messiah, President Ray Hostetter and Harold Heie, Academic Dean, also welcomed each person to the consultation.

The consultation took place in conjunction with Messiah College's Annual Lectures on Religion and Society. Participants attended two chapel sessions with students and faculty. In the first, on Tuesday morning, James McClendon, an ethicist from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, Calif., spoke on "Social Ethics for Radical Christians." In the second, on Thursday, Marian Franz, Executive Director of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund and a registered lobbyist in Washington, D.C., challenged her audience on "Conscience and Public Action." On Wednesday evening, the speaker was Paul Henry, Republican congressman from Michigan and the son of evangelical theologian Carl F. H. Henry. These presentations were helpful outside reference points to our more "inside" discussion.

The historical, sociological and biographical contexts

Following the mandate that this be a "working consultation," we spent two and a half days together, first of all listening and responding to several major presentations, and then working in small groups and as a whole to point a direction for the future.

Martin Schrag, and Morris Sider, Brethren in Christ theologian and historian, respectively, reviewed "The Heritage of the Brethren in Christ" regarding political involvement (see excerpts), followed by some additional comments by Beulah Hostetter, Associate Director of the Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, on other separatist groups. She noted that all Anabaptist and Pietist groups which came to Pennsylvania were

pacifist and chose to separate from the state church. Doug Jacobsen, a professor in the Department of Biblical Studies at the college, presented a paper on "Separatisms of the Past and Present," documenting how the practice of separation has shifted with little attention to what was gained or lost. He suggested that one course of action might be for American Anabaptists to forge new ties with blacks, minorities, and others around the world. The third major presentation was by Ronald J. Sider, President of Evangelicals for Social Action, on "Should Pacifist Christians Become Involved in Politics?" (see excerpts, p. 8).

One of the highlights of the consultation was finding out the results of the questionnaire on "The Church and Public Policy" which had been distributed to about 60 randomly selected Brethren in Christ congregations. As we saw the empirical evidence of Brethren in Christ attitudes, we were reminded again of the disparity that often exists between those who gather for consultations like this one and average members of local congregations. (See boxed summary of the survey results.)

The intellectual stimulation, factual information, and biblical challenge of the major papers, coupled with the questions raised by the survey, served as a good backdrop for the second half of the consultation. Four people shared their personal journeys regarding political involvement. Myron Dietz, a member of the River Brethren, described himself as a former "stubborn Republican mule," but now wonders where we should put our energies when only 8 percent of the world are evangelical Christians. Roy Sider, Overseas Secretary for the Board for World Missions, expressed his conviction that the position most consistent with Jesus' life and teachings is to refrain from partisan politics. It is very difficult, he said, to witness effectively to the state until we have more closely modeled the lifestyle of Jesus.

On the other hand, Mae Moton, Director of the Jewish Association Services for the Aging and a member

Harriet Bicksler, Harrisburg, Pa., is Education Director for the Board for Brotherhood Concerns and a member of the Grantham, Pa., congregation.

at Fellowship Chapel in the Bronx, N.Y., described herself as an "organizer," declaring that it is our duty as Christians to participate actively in righting such wrongs as drug abuse and homelessness. John Stoner, former Executive Secretary of MCC Peace Section U.S., listed the many ways he had been politically active, but noted that he has mostly sought to challenge Christians on what it means to follow Christ. He said that in Jesus, God revealed how people should live, and if we proclaim Jesus we are inevitably dealing with issues of public policy.

Options for involvement

In a session labeled "Corporate Charting of Options" chaired by Bishop John Byers, six small groups worked to develop workable options for Brethren in Christ involvement in public policy. Suggestions which

were brought back to the total group included:

—Affirm our leaders who are already advocates for us in public policy.

—Continue to work for consensus by creating a network of groups in each congregation.

—Begin with the assumption that we would like to be known by what we stand *for* rather than *against*, nurture and disciple church members in "kingdom values," and provide opportunities for hands-on exposure to people needs.

—Formulate a statement on public policy to present to General Conference (assigned to the Board for Brotherhood Concerns).

—Encourage involvement in existing ministries, such as Paxton Street Home in Harrisburg, which model the church cooperating with

public agencies to meet human needs.

—As alternatives to militarism, encourage service with MCC and personal encounters with people considered "enemies."

—Support existing organizations, like Evangelicals for Social Action and Bread for the World, which are influencing public policy with Christian values.

—Improve methods for sharing the resources we already have on social issues, especially since actual involvement will happen most effectively at the local level.

Reflections for the future

The final session, led by Don Shafer, Brethren in Christ General Secretary, featured four consultation participants who reflected on our time together. Martha Lockwood,

continued on page 8

The political heritage of the Brethren in Christ

Excerpts from a paper by Martin Schrag and Morris Sider presented at the Consultation on the Church and Public Policy.

After tracing the original views of the Brethren in Christ regarding non-involvement in the political process, the authors note more recent factors influencing greater involvement:

1. *The effects of World War II:* Carlton Wittlinger has pointed out . . . that in meeting and defending their non-resistant stance before government officials, the Brethren, along with similar groups, became acclimated to and knowledgeable of the political system, including possibilities "to influence legislation through contacts with politicians and legislative committees."

The war also introduced the Brethren (through alternate service projects) to such forms of social action as work in mental hospitals and relief programs, thus helping to break down resistance to active participation in helping with problems of society.

2. *A more general involvement with society:* As with other so-called separated groups, the Brethren with increasing rapidity moved from farms into professions and industry following 1945. . . . We found out that society was not all bad.

3. *Growing awareness of social issues:* As Brethren moved out from their narrow boundaries, became better educated, and saw more of the wider world, they increasingly came up against the social issues of the day—race, abortion, hunger, and more. Some worked in the professions (health care, social services, education) where they were forced to help make policy decisions on such issues. . . .

4. *Ecumenical relations:* In 1949 the Brethren in Christ joined the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and in 1950 the National Holiness Association (now CHA). Both groups made us—for better or worse—more aware of our American citizenship, and introduced us to such political figures as Mark Hatfield.

5. *Weakening of the premillennialistic influence:* Since 1945 there has been much less dogmatism concerning the nature of the end times, and this leaves room for a rationale for greater involvement, politically and otherwise, in the life of the community and nation.

6. *The Eisenhower phenomenon:* It would be interesting to know how many Brethren in Christ voted for the first time in one of the Eisenhower presidential elections—of course, for the general. For Eisenhower was one of our Sunday school boys from Kansas, his grandfather Jacob and Uncle Abe well-known figures in the denomination. Here was politics brought home in good people. . . .

7. *The leadership of Ronald J. Sider and Evangelicals for Social Action:* Sider (a Brethren in Christ minister and formerly a member of the Messiah College faculty), more than any other in the group, sharpened our sense of the need for and possibilities of political involvement. . . .

(The complete text of this paper will be published in the December 1989 issue of *Brethren in Christ History and Life*.)

Church and Public Policy

from page 7

Director of Special Ministries at the Palmyra (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church, said she was "proud—in a humble way—of our heritage" and challenged us to hold fast to our distinctives, speaking and preaching forthrightly about peace and brotherhood. This is especially important among our youth, she said, because they often don't know we are a peace church and are heavily influenced by the "yuppie mentality."

John Lapp, Executive Secretary of MCC, commented that the main topic had been derailed and that we were forced to ask questions about Brethren in Christ identity and authenticity. He also called on the Board for Brotherhood Concerns to develop a 6-8 hour study process on

public policy issues for congregations and to work at encouraging response to such corporate and global issues as militarism and racism. Janet Peifer, a seminary student and pastoral assistant at the Refton (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church, confessed that she has been a classic example of the passive, disinterested layperson and went on to make several personal commitments. She also suggested that this consultation should be one of many, especially in individual congregations, which facilitate dialogue on difficult issues.

Reminding us that the Lord has taken the Brethren in Christ saltshaker and has poured us out on the world, Oklahoma City pastor Warren Hoffman nonetheless confessed his need to be more salty and to intentionally teach discipleship and kingdom values in his congregation. He committed himself to giving pastoral

guidance to his people facing public policy issues.

The concluding moments were spent reflecting on two questions: What will we do differently? How will we carry this discussion forward? The Board for Brotherhood Concerns was affirmed in its agenda and given integrity and vision for continuing to resource and equip individuals to respond helpfully to social issues and to create additional opportunities for dialogue. We agreed that political involvement must not happen at the expense of a radical commitment to Jesus and his counter-cultural community of believers. We left with a strong challenge to respect differing opinions and convictions and to find new ways—including becoming involved in public policy when it is appropriate—to minister to the brokenness in our world in Jesus' name. ■

Should pacifist Christians become involved in politics?

Excerpts from Ronald J. Sider's presentation at the Consultation on the Church and Public Policy.

... Both the Bible and sociology underline the importance of social structures in the shaping of individuals and society. And one of the ways we reshape social structures is via politics. ... Neglect of the biblical teaching on structural injustice or institutionalized evil is one of the most deadly omissions in many parts of the church today.

... Institutional change is often more effective. A good job retraining program is more valuable than a basket of groceries for the man who is technologically unemployed. Christians are sometimes like the people who try to control flies by using only fly swatters and sticky tape. Their job is never done. But if the flies can be stopped from breeding, fly swatters are seldom needed.

Institutional change is often morally better. Personal charity and philanthropy still permit the rich donor to feel superior. And it makes the recipient feel inferior and dependent. Institutional changes, on the other hand, give the oppressed rights and power. Belonging to a union is much better than being a well-treated slave—it is better both for the worker's self respect and for the employer's attitude toward the worker. ...

We dare not sacrifice our peace witness for political engagement. We must be absolutely clear that our first and highest commitment in politics is to Jesus Christ and his kingdom's values. Only secondarily do we care about effectiveness.

We will adopt a biblically-balanced agenda. That means that we say no to nuclear weapons *and* abortion, no to drunken drivers *and* environmental pollution. We say yes to

the family *and* to the poor, yes to freedom and yes to justice. If one is a radical in the sixties and a neo-conservative in the eighties, one ought to ask who is setting the agenda.

We will be a voice for the poor, oppressed, and marginalized. We will demonstrate a biblical separation from the world if our political engagement is for the sake of the poor rather than ourselves.

We will continue to insist that war is *not* the way to peace and justice. And we will propose and model nonviolent alternatives for conflict resolution at the level of family, community, nation, and world. Unless we are ready to incur the same risk that soldiers do, the world will rightly suspect that we don't really believe that Jesus truly offers an alternative to the sword. ...

... The church *as church* should educate its members on how biblical norms ought to inform all political choices, and it should encourage many of its members to be actively involved in politics and all its members to vote. It should nurture and disciple members with particular political gifts to become political leaders guided by the biblical vision of shalom. But we must always avoid the temptation to exaggerate the importance of politics. Political activity is not the only way to change history. ... A mature Christian perspective on politics will rest satisfied with these limited expectations.

(The complete text of this paper will be published in the December 1989 issue of *Brethren in Christ History and Life*.)

Who are we today?

A survey of Brethren in Christ political attitudes



reported by Harriet Bicksler

Conducted by John Yeatts and Ron Burwell of Messiah College, in cooperation with the Board for Brotherhood Concerns, the questionnaire, "The Church and Public Policy," was distributed to about 60 randomly selected congregations. The results of that questionnaire were described by Yeatts, who chairs Messiah's Dept. of Biblical Studies,

and Burwell, a sociology professor at Messiah, as part of the consultation.

They reported that about 70% of the churches responded—a higher return rate than probably could have been achieved by phone or mail. Of those who responded, 72 percent of Americans registered themselves as Republicans, and 44 percent of

Canadians said they belong to the Progressive Conservative party (although 24 percent of Canadians didn't identify themselves with any political party). While 67 percent voted in the most recent national election (higher than the national average), very few have held political office themselves.

The questionnaire listed eighteen public policy attitudes with which respondents were instructed to agree, disagree, or indicate uncertainty. For example, more than 80 percent disagreed with these statements about abortion: "Abortion should be available to any woman who wants it," and "Abortion should be legal." On the other hand, 60 percent agreed that "unless we have a strong military, we risk attack by enemy countries," and 59 percent agreed that "anyone who is willing to work can get ahead in life." There was strong support for anti-pornography legislation and for protecting the environment. Some ambivalence seemed present in responses to statements about AIDS, women, and racism. For example, 62 percent either disagreed or were uncertain about whether "persons with AIDS should have the same rights as any other person," 60 percent either disagreed or were uncertain about whether "more women should be involved in governmental policy formation, and 70 percent disagreed or were uncertain about whether "members of racial minority groups do not receive equal treatment from the police and courts."

Another section measured public policy involvement, such as talking to someone about an issue, signing a petition, contacting a legislator, contributing money or time, marching or demonstrating, or joining an organization. Issues on which there was a high level of involvement were abortion, hunger (mostly financial contributions), environment, and pornography. Low involvement issues were women's issues, racism, AIDS, war and peace, and gun control.

continued on page 11

Summary of Responses Questionnaire on the Church and Public Policy

Information on the respondents

Sex: Male 46% Female 54%

Age: Under 21 5% 31-35 15% 46-50 9% 61-65 6%
21-25 6% 36-40 13% 51-55 9% 66-70 5%
26-30 10% 41-45 10% 56-60 4% Over 70 7%

Regional Conference:

Allegheny 31% Atlantic 11% Canadian 7%
Central 19% Midwest 16% Pacific 16%

Political Party Affiliation:

(United States)
Democrat 19% Republican 72% Independent 8%
(Canada)
Progressive Conservative 44% Liberal 15%
New Democratic 7% Independent 7% Other 3%

Did you vote in the most recent national election?

Yes 67% No 27% Missing 6%

Have you ever held a political or elected office (check as many as apply):

National .2% State/Provincial .4% Local 3%

Which of the following is your general political orientation (check one)

Very conservative 10%
Conservative 54%
Moderate 26%
Liberal 4%
Very Liberal 0%
None 6%

General Attitudes and involvements

Have you done any of the following in the last five years for any cause? (check all that apply)

Talked to someone 50%
Signed petition 49%
Contacted legislator 21%
Contributed financially 44%
Marched or demonstrated 2%
Joined an organization 9%

Which of the following is your dominant religious orientation? (check one)

Fundamentalist 10%
Evangelical 47%
Anabaptist 21%
Wesleyan 8%
Conservative 10%
Liberal 3%

Public Policy Involvement

What have you personally done about the following issues? (check all that apply.)

	Talked to Someone	Signed Petition	Contacted Legislator	Contributed Financially	Contributed Time	Marched or Demonstrated	Joined Organization	Index
Abortion	53%	33%	9%	16%	6%	2%	3%	196
Gun Control	33%	8%	4%	3%	0%	0%	3%	72
Hunger/Poverty	34%	3%	3%	47%	14%	1%	3%	180
War and Peace	33%	4%	2%	5%	5%	1%	2%	74
AIDS	40%	6%	3%	2%	2%	0%	0%	66
Environment	68%	12%	5%	9%	6%	0%	3%	141
Pornography	38%	26%	8%	5%	2%	0%	2%	126
Women's Issues	30%	4%	3%	2%	1%	0%	1%	53
Racism	33%	3%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	52

Public Policy Attitudes

Check the one position that most closely resembles your own attitude toward the statement.

Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	
5%	8%	87%	Abortion should be available to any woman who wants it.
9%	11%	80%	Abortion should be legal.
60%	23%	17%	Unless we have a strong military, we risk attack by enemy countries.
54%	35%	11%	Christian peacekeeping teams could help to solve international disputes.
33%	20%	47%	Small hand guns should be illegal.
53%	18%	29%	If guns were outlawed, only outlaws would have guns.
39%	29%	33%	Persons with AIDS should have the same rights as any other persons.
62%	20%	18%	It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.
59%	18%	23%	Anyone who is willing to work can get ahead in life.
68%	19%	13%	More money and effort should be spent on self-help programs for the poor.
82%	10%	9%	Our survival depends on how we use and conserve the earth's resources.
94%	2%	4%	Dumping wastes into oceans, rivers and lakes is like pretending the house is clean by sweeping dirt under the rug.
88%	5%	7%	All pornographic materials should be banned.
89%	5%	5%	Stronger censorship of obscenity and pornography is desirable.
70%	16%	13%	Women should have the same vocational benefits and opportunities as males.
40%	37%	23%	More women should be involved in governmental policy formation.
29%	40%	30%	Members of racial minority groups do not receive equal treatment from the police and courts.
11%	25%	64%	Qualifications and standards should be modified, temporarily, in order to get people from racial minorities into professions.

To what extent do you believe in the teachings of the Brethren in Christ Church? (check one)

Complete agreement 25%
Near complete agreement 53%
Some reservations 18%
Many reservations 3%
Little agreement 1%

How often do you attend church? (check one)

Once a week or more 86%
Two or three times a month 13%
Once a month 1%
A few times a year or less 0%

Other than in church, how often do you pray? (check one)

Once a day or more 84%
Two or three times a week 14%
About once a week 2%
Less than once a week 2%

Who are we today?

continued from page 9

The last section of the questionnaire solicited general attitudes and involvements. Eighty percent are self-described political conservatives or moderates. When asked to identify their dominant theological orientation, 47 percent said they were "evangelical," and 21 percent said they were Anabaptist. Only 8 percent said they were Wesleyan. Seventy-eight percent said they were in complete or near complete agreement with the teachings of the Brethren in Christ Church. Those who participated in the survey are spiritually active: 86 percent attend church once a week or more, and 84 percent pray once a day or more.

In his comments to the consultation participants, Yeatts noted the limitations of the questionnaire: the character of the sample (only adult Sunday school attenders), the response rate (while it was fairly high, it was not complete), and the tentative nature of the report because of time constraints. Also, there was a relatively low response from the

Canadian Conference. He noted that the questionnaire confirmed that abortion and pornography are major agenda items for the Board for Brotherhood Concerns (the board presented statements on both to General Conference in 1986), and that it is clear that we are no longer a separate people.

Ron Burwell then tentatively characterized "politically involved people": they are mostly male baby-boomers from the Atlantic, Pacific and Central Conferences who vote. (The actual statistical variations were not great, however.) Political party doesn't make much difference; neither does one's dominant religious orientation. The most involved people are the ones in "near complete agreement" with Brethren in Christ teachings, most frequent church attenders and prayers.

Because Burwell is new to the Brethren in Christ, having been at Messiah College and the Grantham Church for about four years, he was able to make some "outside" sociological observations based on the results of this survey: 1) the data is similar to that coming from other religiously conservative groups; 2) there is no clear-cut evidence of our heritage of nonresistance; 3) the

Brethren in Christ have a conservative social agenda; 4) on the basis of his experience with the denomination, he was surprised that "Anabaptist" was not more commonly designated as the dominant religious orientation.

The discussion following their presentation was lively, as participants struggled to understand the meaning of the results. Many expressed dismay over the conservative nature of the identified agenda and the low priority given to issues of peace and social justice (particularly militarism, women's issues and race). Some wondered who is setting the agenda for the Brethren in Christ—perhaps we are too heavily influenced both by our culture and by the strong voice of the Religious Right which dominates the media. As leaders in the church we have a responsibility to help to develop in our people a "group conscience" and a desire to follow Jesus.

Clearly, these results are not complete, and any conclusions made at this time are tentative. Yeatts and Burwell plan to continue their analysis and to write up a more comprehensive report for the December issue of *Brethren in Christ History and Life*. ■

Personal reflections on the consultation

Cathy Stoner

Despite the fact that I was mistaken for my dad's wife no fewer than five times during the course of the consultation, I was one of the youngest participants in the meetings. This tidbit is more amusing than it is material to the following observations.

I was delighted at the candidness with which the Board for Brotherhood Concerns admitted that the consultation was an attempt to "bring the Brethren in Christ's theology in line with their practice" on matters of political involvement. I was equally refreshed by the

group's consensus on the importance of the Great Commission and radical kingdom values such as non-violence. This basic level of agreement should have allowed the consultation to operate more on a level of "How do we best publicly express what we believe?" than "What do we believe?"

But the issues of Brethren in Christ teachings and identity kept cropping up. It arose so frequently, in fact, that the consultation could well have been subtitled "An Historical and Contemporary Exploration of Brethren in Christ Separatism, Social Action, Affluence, Church Growth, Evangelism and Eschatology." We covered some ground here that I couldn't help thinking should be travelled in every church membership class.

(See the editorial on page 31)

Several voices among us pointed out a notable disparity between the attitudes and beliefs of those present and general Brethren in Christ membership. The Yeatts/Burwell survey results bore this out.

So I left the conference with some ambivalent feelings. On one hand I was encouraged to see my elders grappling with the appropriateness of working to affect public policy on issues consistent with the Bible's call to preach the gospel and be peacemakers. But on the other hand I'm disheartened. The prospect of an "Historic Peace Church" becoming involved in public policy is a scary one when many of its members, including my peers—the youth—do not share our church mothers' and fathers' radical commitment to nonviolence and siding

Cathy Stoner, Akron, PA, will graduate this spring from Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA.

with the oppressed. So "Who are we, the Brethren in Christ?"—or more importantly, "What does it mean to follow Jesus?"—are the questions this stimulating consultation raised in my youthful soul.

Mary Steffy

A Consultation on the Church and Public Policy? That sounded like a fascinating event, so I wrote for more information. The consultation is history and I was not disappointed. I am left with more questions than answers, but I am relieved that we are raising the questions.

We, the church, are a diverse group. Do we share more differences than commonality? How can we most effectively be the salt and light that our world needs? Is it time to appreciate our Anabaptist tradition and separatist practices while tempering that with a willingness to be intentional in our choices to influence public policies in the world? Where are the present day prophetic voices, besides Ron Sider and John Stoner, in the church and how can we support them? According to the survey done by John Yeatts and Ron Burwell, women and minorities are at the bottom of our list of concerns. Does that tell us anything about our understanding of the Scriptures? Does our call to love include the need to confront evil? And how do we love sisters and brothers with whom we disagree on issues and interpretations? To me these are some of the questions which we addressed, questions without simple, black and white answers.

From the intellectual, academic presentations to the group discussions and informal conversations, I appreciated being a part of women and men together, leaders and laity, conservatives and liberals openly and lovingly struggling with what it means to be the church in today's world.

I applaud the individuals from Messiah College and the Board for Brotherhood Concerns (I'd prefer a more inclusive title—Church Family Concerns?) for providing this valuable forum. I hope it has been the first of many, on various levels, to help us corporately and individually to articulate our faith in meaningful ways and to translate that into faithful living for Jesus.

Mary Steffy is a mental health professional and a member of the Lancaster (PA) congregation.

A sawdust trail to social reform

by Wally Kroeker

Revivalism has fallen out of fashion among modern Christians. Tent revivals with their fire-and-brimstone preaching and emotional appeals to "come forward" no longer hold their early prominence. For many they have even become an object of derision.

Revivalists since 1890 had been easy prey for those who sought to ridicule conservative Christianity. There was much fuel for criticism, such as the excesses of a Billy Sunday, or the blind civil religion of others. Revivalists were criticized, often justly, for being shallow and hyper-emotional.

Another criticism was that they posed a half-way Christianity, a heartless, other-worldly pietism, a faith that had little or no social dimension.

Amid all this it became difficult to remember that the revivalist tradition had an altogether different rootage. Helping change some popular perceptions of early revivalism was Timothy L. Smith, a church historian who in 1957 produced a landmark book titled *Revivalism & Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War*.

While no less critical of revivalist excesses, Smith gave the early history of revivalism a hearing. He found not only that the soul of revivalism was entirely different from its distant offspring but also that the revivalist spirit was in fact at the center of America's civil war era "heritage of hope." Revivalism was not, as had been thought, a mere fringe aberration, nor was it the first wedge driven between conservative Christianity and social reform. "Far from

disdaining earthly affairs," writes Smith, "the evangelists played a key role in the widespread attack upon slavery, poverty and greed. They thus helped prepare the way both in theory and in practice for what later became known as the social gospel."

Revivalism, he convincingly argues, ushered in numerous changes in North American Protestantism, among them, a sharpening of ethical concerns. His study is instructive for modern Christians, especially those who are concerned that contemporary Christendom sometimes suffers from a form of social action schizophrenia. Smith shows that such schizophrenia has not always attended the evangelical journey.

Revivals were a vital part of American Christianity in the nineteenth century, says Smith. They were not a mere fringe activity. "The cutting edge of American Christianity after 1850 was the revival, adopted and promoted in one form or another by major segments of all denominations." He further documents how evangelical zeal and social betterment rode the same parallel rails across the American frontier during the heyday of revivalism.

The awakening of 1858, for example, was foundational to a "tremendous advance" in Christian social reform. This was consistent with developments elsewhere. J. Edwin Orr, among other authorities on revivals, has documented how major renewals in England and Wales led to redressing social ills such as the slave trade, prison reform, public education and labor reform.

A new "ethical seriousness" and reorientation swept across the North American Protestant landscape. A handbook of the earlier English evangelical awakening was frequently

Wally Kroeker is editor of The Marketplace. This article was reprinted by permission from the January/February 1988 issue.

quoted, maintaining that "every genuine religious experience . . . must express itself ethically."

Revivalists paid attention when Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* asked whether the revival of 1858 "would produce a greater concern for business honesty and the lot of the slave." A thoughtful interpreter of the revival commented that "its distinguishing mark was a rebuke to the love of riches which had stolen across America's churches and a revitalization of the Christian view of property."

Christian clergy and laypeople were at the forefront of the fight against slavery. Abolitionist periodicals, meanwhile, enthusiastically promoted revivals. "The notion that revivalism coincided with bigotry in nineteenth-century Christianity must yield to the contrary facts," says Smith.

The rise of concern about ethical issues such as poverty, workers rights, liquor, slum housing and racial strife is the "chief feature distinguishing American religion after 1865 from that of the first half of the nineteenth century." The concern went beyond mere almsgiving, to a search for the causes of suffering and "a campaign to reconstruct social and economic relations upon a Christian pattern."

Reawakened evangelicals became sensitized to the plight of those whom a grasping industrial system had dumped into city slums. "Cities attracted improverished migrants while at the same time giving businessmen the opportunity to amass fortunes quickly." Evangelical editors and clergy rang the alarm on these concerns.

Early revivalists saw the Good Samaritan as a parable for their time.

Para-church organizations such as the American Sunday School Union paid special attention to the children of the urban ghettos. Local outreach groups, formerly involved primarily in evangelistic pursuits, widened their scope to include providing clothing, food, jobs and homes for the destitute.

The Christian perfectionism of the day, far from the individualistic other-worldliness preached by many later revivalists, taught that "spirituality must be expressed in irreproachable morality and unceasing efforts to reform society."

Revivalist editors fearlessly attacked the unbridled greed of the wealthy and their neglect of the poor, accusing them of "deep-seated, practical infidelity." Revivalists typically warned that the love of money would diminish social concern.

Washington Gladden's hymn, "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee," still sung today in churches where his social interests have long since ceased to be a matter of religious concern, reflects the spiritual root of his many appeals in behalf of workers rights.

Churches and para-church organizations regarded the Bible as an instrument of reform. Evangelicals of all stripes, says Smith, "were attacking the abuses of wealth and acknowledging that relief of the impoverished and oppressed was a primary task of the Christian church."

The temperance movement pricked many a social conscience. Drunkenness was obviously the cause of much poverty, but poverty and victimization at the hands of heartless exploiters was also the cause of much drunkenness. Prominent evangelicals fought not only against alcohol abuse, but also against the forces which produced it.

They established prison ministries for both men and women. Lay leaders such as Phoebe Palmer set up missions to minister to the poor. There was a growing awareness that it would take more than fervent preaching to minister wholistically to the needy. Derelict women and

children, says Smith, "needed jobs, food, clothing and the kind of home where, in the absence of husbands and fathers, they could be gradually restored to a self-respecting life."

Job creation was seen as a vital force for mission. A New York minister rented a hall and a shirt manufacturer agreed to let out piece work to those who needed employment. The rented hall became a garment factory by day and a gospel center by night. The minister went on to establish a "House of Industry" which eventually supported 500 people.

Social ministries extended to meet the needs of seamen and immigrants. Industrial schools were set up. "Scores of wealthy city congregations of all communions operated chapels for the underprivileged as a regular part of their work."

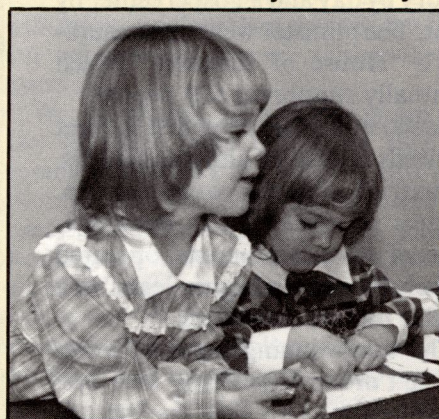
The "soul-winning impulse," writes Smith, "drove Christians into systematic efforts to relieve the miseries of the urban poor." The awakening of 1858 had "convinced churchmen everywhere that the story of the Good Samaritan was a parable for their time."

Responsible for much of this missionary and benevolent work were laypeople—businesspeople, professionals and others—of all denominations, says Smith. "All these activities were pursued with a seriousness absent today."

Though now three decades old, Smith's study still raises concerns that are remarkably fresh and relevant. The twentieth century evangelical church has strayed far from its earlier roots. Many churches and leaders no longer see the vital connection between inner faith and outward action; social ministries are often regarded as inferior. On the eve of the civil war, American Protestantism had happily and enthusiastically married the spiritual and social spheres. Infidelity and estrangement came later. Timothy Smith's study is an encouragement to struggle to recover the lost soul of that early wedded bliss. ■

God is growing a Sunday school at Summit View

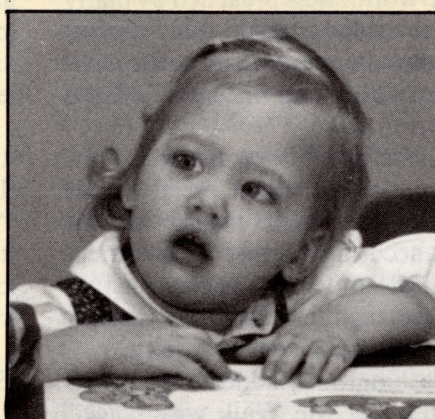
by Janice Myer



How does God grow a Sunday school? Definitely not by any measure that any human would grow one. Sometimes we need to look very closely to see any amount of growth at all. Other times we are amazed by the miraculous growth that God has in his plan. Whatever the situation, God is in control.

The seed of the Sunday school at Summit View began sprouting on September 5, 1982, when the church planting in New Holland had its first morning worship service. Twenty-two people met in the basement of a private residence for a little more than six years. During that time, the seedling grew very slowly. Sometimes it seemed as though it was beginning to wither, but God continued to provide the sunshine, water, and nourishment at just the right times to keep it alive. Although our Sunday school was small, we had a program that provided classes for ages two to adult.

In January of 1988 we moved into our first permanent church facility. The Sunday school teachers would now have



attractive rooms, tables, chairs, blackboard, and bulletin boards for their use. We thought surely God would grow our Sunday school quickly now in order to fill up this big building! We had many visitors during the first eight months in the new facility, but most of those people remained just visitors—only a few began attending our Sunday school. We ended the 1987-1988 Sunday school year with an average attendance of 49. Was God going to allow this Sunday school to wither after coming this far? Would we have the patience to wait for God to grow us? These two questions passed through our thoughts at that time.

As we began the new Sunday school year in the fall of 1988, we were optimistic that good things were going to happen; but we didn't know how or when. We looked to God for his guidance and direction for us. We didn't have to wait long. Our Sunday school began growing! Many times we were amazed at the miraculous growth that God was allowing to happen right before our very eyes. The Sunday school was sending out many roots, branches, and leaves all at the same time! During the first seven months of this current Sunday school year, we have been able to add 40 new people to our Sunday school rolls.

God has been growing our Sunday

school at Summit View at a very fast rate in the past several months. Was this just a coincidence? I don't think it has been. Everything has happened according to God's plan and time. God has guided us and provided us with several things to enable this growth process to take place. Let me share several of them with you.

First and most important is the fact that God allowed this growth process to happen. We can never doubt God's mighty power at work among us. God directed and led people to Summit View where our Sunday school could minister to them. God guided people as decisions were made and changes instituted to provide for better Sunday school classes.

Second, we have a very dedicated teaching staff. Our teachers are excited and enthusiastic about teaching and sharing God's word with their classes. They are eager to learn and improve their teaching gifts and they attend teacher training sessions for this purpose. The teachers care about their students, whether they teach toddlers, children, youth, or adults. They send postcards and make contacts with pupils who are absent. Several people have shared with me how much these contacts have meant to them or a member of their family.

Third, we have classes of children, youth, and adults who enjoy their Sunday school classes. They are able to learn from God's word and apply those truths to their everyday lives. One adult shared with me the other Sunday morning, "I enjoy my Sunday school class so much. I am getting so much out of it that I just don't want to miss it. I always thought Sunday school was just for children."

Fourth, after seeking God's guidance and direction for almost a year and with some helpful suggestions from the Board for Congregational Life, we decided to restructure our adult classes this past fall. We had been constantly moving adults each quarter because of curriculum topics and this did not create a good class situation for the teacher or the pupils. We formed three adult classes including in each one several people who had not attended Sunday school but who had shown some interest in our church. Each class began with a teacher(s) and president. Other officers were then elected and class activities planned. Class activities have created fellowship opportunities and the classes have developed into groups that care and share with each other.

Janice Myer is Sunday School Superintendent, Chairperson of Commission on Congregational Life, Youth Sunday School Teacher, and Wednesday Evening Club Leader at Summit View Brethren in Christ Church. She lives near New Holland with her husband Nelson and their four sons, Kevin, Daryl, Joel, and Brian.

Fifth, each October we have our Sunday school rally month at which time we promote our Sunday school. This past October our theme was "Following In The Footprints Of Jesus." Throughout the entire month we had special activities which followed this theme. One Sunday each person attending Sunday school traced their footprints. They were then hung in our sanctuary, each one leading to the cross at the front. One of our adult classes presented a skit about Jesus' birth. On the third Sunday we focused on Jesus' min-

istry by having Bible characters such as Mary, Peter, Martha, and Paul serve refreshments to the classes. We also had a wood carver carve roosters while we listened to the story of Peter's denying Jesus three times before Jesus' death. On that Sunday everyone received a carved rooster to take along home. Our month concluded with a balloon launch to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. The entire month created a great deal of excitement and interest in our Sunday school.

Our facility, particularly our educa-

tion wing, is becoming increasingly fuller because of our rapid growth. In the fall we began this year with classes of 5 or 6 children, but we now are faced with the pleasant problem of trying to fit 11 and 12 children around a table. God is still helping us grow. On Easter Sunday we reached a record high Sunday school attendance of 86 people. We don't know what God has in his plan for Summit View in the future, but we do know that God can grow a Sunday school. He is doing it right before our very eyes! ■



Safari Club

by Phyllis J. Lehman

It's like a zoo in here! I've said it kiddingly, but sometimes it feels that way. Teaching two- and three-year-olds is not an easy task. Some evenings I wonder if they've learned anything. Then there are the nights when they actually do listen, recite verses, sing songs, and practice concepts. Those evenings make it all worthwhile. Those eager eyes and enthusiastic hugs are rewarding. I find the honesty, love, and acceptance of preschoolers refreshing.

Safari Club is a Wednesday night club program being developed at the Mechanicsburg church for two- to five-year-olds. At this point, there is one group for the older children and another for the younger ones. Since the program is held in the evening, we have found it is beneficial to both the children and to us as leaders to have a very relaxed and fun program.

We use a Bible verse with each unit to explain how Jesus feels about

specific areas in our lives. However, since Bible stories are used in Sunday school, in preschool church, and in many other settings, we decided to teach the central truth in the Bible story with animal stories. These stories reinforce such biblical principles as sharing, kindness, self-control, giving, and loving.

Review is a primary emphasis in planning and teaching. Each unit lasts approximately four weeks. This allows four sessions to teach and review, using songs, games, finger plays, and memory verses. Games are a good opportunity to practice concepts. They are fun and they teach at the same time. It's beneficial for the young children to release energy, too. The songs we choose are usually full of action. Finger plays reinforce the main concept of the story by acting out imaginary situations.

To keep things from becoming too routine, some things change each evening. Because the snack correlates to the lesson, it is different each week. For example, if the lesson is on anger, we may use a cookie with a smiling face to show how God can change the angry feelings to

happy ones. We might practice sharing by sharing apple pieces with each other. Since coloring pages review the stories told, they also change from week to week.

Craft time is probably the hardest part to develop. I believe that crafts should be done *by* (not *for*) the children. This is a real challenge when working with the two-year-old group. We have used stickers and finger painting (with smocks, of course), and we've made sharing baskets, muffins in the microwave, and no-bake cookies. The crafts also give opportunity to review the lesson concept being taught.

Some special activities are occasionally included to help the children practice what they have been taught. For example, aerobics night showed the children how to exercise and keep their bodies healthy. One evening, the four- and five-year-old group shared fruit baskets with some residents of a rest home who didn't have many visitors.

Teaching preschoolers is a very rewarding challenge. It takes a lot of energy, planning, and prayer to be successful. It is also somewhat frightening to realize that preschoolers believe everything they are told. Time and a lot of patience are required to listen to each of them eagerly tell of their experiences. But the rewards do come, in the form of enthusiastic hugs, giggles, greetings, and much more. My greatest reward is knowing that I am serving the Lord and I am privileged to be able to share his love with these precious bundles of energy and potential. ■

A mother of three children, Phyllis Lehman is co-developer and co-leader (along with Rhonda Palmer) of the Safari Club program of the Mechanicsburg, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church.

Missions = Vitality

PART II

by Harvey R. Sider

It has been my observation that often congregations which support missions through giving of personnel, intercessory prayer, and sacrificial giving through Cooperative Ministries exhibit a vitality and purpose that creates a wholesome and enjoyable atmosphere. If a church seems lifeless, filled with self-centeredness, turmoil or lack of enthusiasm, it should examine the priority it places on winning the lost for Christ, both at the local level and in its support for world missions.

Moving ahead

How can the local church grow in its missions awareness? A congregation can do many things to enhance appreciation and support for overseas missions and, in turn, become more dynamic at the home base. Some of the following ideas are being practiced. They are highlighted again to encourage wholehearted involvement.

1. *Sponsor a missionary*—Stayner was one of the churches that sponsored our family in India. It was most encouraging to know that we had a faithful prayer ministry behind us. Correspondence, pictures, and tapes helped both our sponsoring church and us to sense mutuality in ministry.

Stayner continues to be a very active participant in supporting our missionaries through both prayer and finances. In 1988, along with

significant giving to reduce the capital indebtedness of a new and greatly expanded facility, the congregation contributed \$25,000 to Cooperative Ministries. Included in this was partial support for 10 Brethren in Christ missionaries. One senses a vital relationship between this and their fine numerical membership growth and expansion into their new facilities.

Cooperative Ministries makes provision for a congregation to financially support specific missionaries. The personal touch creates interest, encourages sacrificial giving, sponsors a spirit of ownership, and makes possible a better understanding of the ministry of the missionary and the national church, thus making prayer more specific and accountable.

2. *Build bridges with missionaries*—Soon after we arrived in India, Sheryl Byers, through missions awareness at the Souderton congregation, became a pen pal with our daughter Cheryl. Even though we had no prior connection, this new relationship was both meaningful and encouraging to the two C(S)heryls and their parents.

Bridgebuilding with missionary families can be fun and a source of real blessing to both parties. How can this happen? First, read the list of missionaries in the quarterly editions of *Therefore*. You may want to contact the Brethren in Christ missions offices for more information. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in choosing a single person or family as a correspondent. Always be aware that the missionary has many cor-

respondents, so don't place too great a burden on the missionary to return letters. Keep writing even if the missionary's only response is to send you a form letter.

3. *A missions event*—For the past several years my wife, Erma, has had the privilege of coordinating missionary schedules in the Canadian Conference churches. She has learned that every church wants a missionary—on Sunday morning, of course. We often forget that some of the most meaningful missions contacts are made through the more informal weekday events. Dessert evenings with young adults, pizza parties for the youth, or coffee time with church leaders provide relaxed opportunities for missionaries to express what the Lord has been doing in their lives and ministry. It also provides opportunity for valuable interaction not possible on a Sunday morning. In the late fall of 1988, six churches cooperated in an area missions weekend. Missionaries were co-hosted for events from Friday dinner to Saturday night with a program geared to each age/interest group. They were able to speak in each church on Sunday. This provided much broader exposure than if they had simply "preached" on Sunday morning. As well, it allowed participation by those missionaries who might not feel comfortable as the main speaker for a worship service.

4. *"Think missions"*—Churches have very full schedules. Pastors and missions committees must be open to a variety of ways to "think missions." One church has a missions

Bishop Harvey Sider of the Canadian Conference served 12 years as a missionary in India. Part 1 was in the May issue.

poster which is changed monthly. Another church makes use of Brethren in Christ World Missions films. Children at Bertie "walk for missions." A ladies' group used its Christmas offering, usually used for personal gifts, to send books to children's hostels in India. Upper Oaks ladies had fun convening a baby shower for newborn Hannah Clare Sider, (Malawi), while Grandmother "stood in" for the mom and babe. Many churches are using the Sunday prayer focus for missionaries in their bulletins. Rosebank planned a "Missions Youth Conference." Since a "real, live missionary" is not always available to speak, a retired missionary could give a talk on re-entry problems for missionaries. Other resource people could be parents of missionaries, summer missions personnel, Board for World Missions office personnel (including administrators and staff), church planting pastors and spouses. Current books and periodicals like *A Scent of Water* and *World Christian* should be in every church library and ought to be highlighted occasionally by someone with a keen interest in missions. Members need to be encouraged by what God is doing beyond the Brethren in Christ.

5. *Pray*—that the purpose of the Brethren in Christ Church will be fulfilled as people around the world hear about and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The "World Christian Intercessor Handbook" is receiving high recommendations from lay people. People are saying, "My prayer life has changed since I started using the 'Handbook.'" Specific requests and answers make praying a current affair. Prayer counts. "When there is an absence of prayer, there will be an absence of power" (Dick Eastman in *The Hour That Changes the World*). Without the prayers of God's people, little will happen either at home or overseas. "Prayer reaches out to a dying world and says, 'I care!'"

Become involved! Let missions become one of the factors to impact and revitalize your life and congregation. ■

Just a vessel

by Zoltan Kiraly and Lewis B. Sider

At about four o'clock in the afternoon of a warm summer day, I sat down on the park bench, waiting for someone with whom I could talk. An old man sat across from me reading a newspaper; a young man was walking his dog.

A beautiful young woman, so gentle and wholesome, walked by with her son and sat on the bench next to me. Her son had the same gentleness and beauty as his mother and possessed a certain innocent joy so common to five-year-old boys. He had the "boyest" blue outfit I had ever seen, right down to his blue cap.

I tried to say hello, but found that English was foreign to her. With the help of a *Say it in . . .* dictionary, I said "hello," but had to say it three times until I pronounced it right. I sat down next to her and tried some other phrases: "What is this?," "My name is . . .," "Where is . . .," and "How much does it cost?" After trying to pronounce these phrases I showed her a book in her language. It was a rare book in her country, very hard to get. I asked her to read from it. She did, and understood that it was a rare book indeed. I told her that she could have it. She

couldn't believe me at first, but I told her that it was in a foreign language to me, and that it wasn't of much use to me.

I told her to read it and to read it to her son as well. She thought I wanted her son to read it, so she said, "But he is too little; he can't read." I gave her a T-shirt that I thought she might give to her husband, but she held it up to her son. It was obviously too big for him. I looked up "husband" in my dictionary and showed her to whom I wanted to give the shirt. Then she showed me her finger. No ring. She wrote in the dirt, "3—free." Her husband had left her and her son three years ago. I didn't know what to say, so I told her I was sorry. Soon after that, I said goodbye to her and went on my way.

This was a most outstanding experience of the past summer: having the opportunity to give a Bible away in the Soviet Union.

This past summer I served as an assistant leader on Teen Missions Team to Hungary and Russia. The Lord's hand was so evident in everything we did. He was there.

The summer began with two weeks of training in the Lord's Boot Camp,

A special invitation

The members of the Brethren in Christ Church in Bihar, India, invite all interested persons to attend the 75th anniversary celebration of the Brethren in Christ Church. This jubilee will be held November 4-7, 1989, at the mission compound at Banmankhi. The jubilee is an opportunity for you to fellowship with friends and participate in daily worship led by Indian and overseas speakers. Other special features will include drama, music, Bible quizzing, and sports. We hope you can attend this celebration.

Emmanuel Roy
Secretary for the Jubilee Committee

Merritt Island, Florida—Teen Missions Headquarters. This was a good time of preparation when the team learned basic construction and evangelism, as well as how to function as a team. This year the weather at Boot Camp was beautiful, considering that this primitive training camp is located in the middle of the swamps of eastern Florida.

Our work in Hungary consisted of two projects—one in Kisvardia, the other in Nyiregyhaza. Our primary work was done in Kisvardia, a small city in northeastern Hungary, located about 30 minutes away from the Soviet border. Here we worked on a 200-year-old building that was a pastor's house as well as a "church meeting place." Twice a week, believers would come to the church for Bible study and prayer. Unfortunately, the building was coming apart, as all old buildings do. The team helped refurbish the building by doing foundation work, tearing down old walls, plastering other walls, painting radiators, and putting new panes in windows. We also poured a 70-foot concrete driveway alongside the building.

In Nyiregyhaza, a city about 30 minutes south of Kisvardia, we also worked on an old church building. There we repoured some outside concrete pavement, made a 15-foot

extension to the driveway, poured a concrete floor in a 15- by 25-foot room, and painted the outside of a 30- by 50-foot building which was used for prayer meetings and the pastor's office.

These churches were part of the Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship. This church has gone through a great deal of persecution. In the early 1960s, when the Hungarian state government tried to take control of the Methodist Church in Hungary, some in the congregation were against this state move, and others welcomed state control. Those who were against the state's involvement in the church broke off from the Hungarian Methodist Church and formed the Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship. This fellowship was not recognized by the state until 1981. Until that time, this church received great persecution. Lay pastors lost their vocational jobs. Pastors were forced to move out of their homes and were relocated in dilapidated ones. But under all of this persecution the church kept true to the faith. It was because of the church's perseverance that the state finally recognized this church. There is still some persecution, and the church has refused any state support, but the church has survived her trial by the fires of persecution.

The main ministry of the Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship Church involves outreach to the gypsies and

poor people of the area. In Hungary, the gypsies are considered to be the outcasts of society. But the Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship tries to relate to them at their level. The pastor in Kisvardia has a circuit of 35 villages which he visits every two weeks. Nearly every night he travels to two or three towns for Bible studies in the homes of believers. Sometimes he holds these Bible studies in the open air outside a believer's home, hoping to attract others with the message of salvation.

Our team had opportunity to be involved in this ministry. The pastor would go with two team members and me to the villages. Since I was the only one on my team who spoke and understood Hungarian, I was chosen to be the translator. On these tours we sang songs, prayed, and gave our testimonies of how the Lord had changed our lives. It was exciting to see the Lord work through the team members. Sometimes when we set up for an open air meeting, some 50-70 gypsies would gather around to see what "these Americans" had to say. We gave them Jesus. There were no altar calls or raising of hands for us to see who had responded, but I know we planted many seeds. I felt especially used as a translator. I was a vessel of God, English being poured in one end, and Hungarian flowing out the other end, and the Word of God flowing through me!

It is awesome to feel used by God, knowing that he gives the strength, and we give him the glory. Indeed, that is what the Christian life should be: getting strength from God and giving God the glory for what he has done. It is not necessary for all of us to go to Russia or Hungary to serve him; we may not be called there. But every Christian is commanded to serve the Lord in all things, in all places. May we be sensitive to his guidance. ■

Associate Minister Needed

Wanted: Associate Minister, Bronx, NY, under direction of senior pastor of Fellowship Chapel Brethren in Christ Church. Will teach and preach Christian gospel and conduct Bible studies in Spanish, lead public worship services, and work with community game nights and church service projects in our South Bronx neighborhood. Two to four years' education in theology or philosophy, with Bachelor's or Associate's degree. One year experience working in Christian churches and/or religious organizations. Committed to Christian faith and in agreement with beliefs and theology of the Brethren in Christ Church. \$15,000 per year. Send resume in duplicate to: R.R. 218, Room 501, One Main St., Brooklyn, NY 11201.

Staff Needed

Timber Bay Children's Home in Saskatchewan, Canada, needs staff for the positions of nurse, cook and kitchen help, and dorm parents for this coming fall. Applicants can be either single or married, and should be able to serve for two or more years on a voluntary service basis. Orientation for the fall semester begins on August 18.

To request more information, write or call Tom Davies, Timber Bay administrator.

Timber Bay Children's Home
Timber Bay, SASK. S0J 2T0
Phone: (306) 663-5811

Zoltan Kiraly is a 1989 graduate of Messiah College. His article was revised by Lewis B. Sider, who serves as an administrative assistant in the Board for World Missions Mount Joy office.

"You can go nowhere where Jesus is not!" This was a motto in our hotel room in Hong Kong. As we took a cruise of the city's harbor, we came close to the boat people. For generations, these crowded conditions have been their life. The next day we took a tour of "The Land Between" (between Hong Kong and China). True to the motto, we found no place where Jesus was not.

As we left Hong Kong and arrived in Bangkok, Thailand last Christmas, this motto was impressed in our minds. We were met by our dear young friends, John and Kathy Brubaker, and their son, Allen. Rev. Allen G. Brubaker (little Allen's great-grandfather) will be well remembered as long as little Allen is around!

We soon felt the miracles we had read about: the benefit of the new job for John with the technical institute; the lovely house at a good rental price; the benefit of a car. We rejoiced with them in those answers to many prayers. "You can go nowhere where Jesus is not!"

At the technical institute, John works in the development department under the vice-president. John writes proposals for large donors. The 10-year report for the department was put onto a computer by John for presentation to the institute's board, which consists of ambassadors from various countries. The vice-president is very highly pleased with John's work. "You can go nowhere where Jesus is not!"

Shirley Johnson is an associate with John and Kathy. She was traveling with a friend while we were in Thailand, so we missed seeing her. We did, however, enjoy taking a number of gifts for her.

A highlight for us was being with the Brubaker family on Christmas eve. Kathy had invited two Thai ladies to prepare a seafood dinner. It was so beautiful to see Kathy work

"You can go nowhere where Jesus is not"

by Henry A. Ginder

with these two beautiful ladies right there in her own kitchen. The dinner was exotic, delicious, and generous. One of the Thai ladies is a Christian; the other is Buddhist. We had great fellowship and fun at dinner in spite of the language and cultural diversity of the dinner group.

After dinner we had a Christmas party for the group. I was asked to tell the Christmas story, with special concern for our one friend who was not a Christian. Then there was a time of gift exchange. The Buddhist lady gave to Martha and me several beautifully carved elephants. I just happened to say the right thing to her: "Oh thank you! Elephants are so gentle." John and Kathy told me later that after Martha and I had gone to our room, she talked very much about us. She said we were just like elephants. (We hope she meant we are gentle like elephants!) It is a joy to relate to others across cultural and religious lines. "You can go nowhere where Jesus is not!"

The Brubakers take an active part in a Thai church, located next to Bangkok Bible College. On Christmas Sunday we worshipped there. The President of the Bible college, Dr. Timothy Jang (a member of the International Placement Service advisory board in Thailand) was the speaker. It was a very good service.

After the service we went to the Bangkok Guest House for the Christ-

mas dinner. It was a great joy to feel the international atmosphere of that dinner. This guest house is where our administrative executives usually stay when they are in Thailand.

The same evening was the Christmas party for the Brubakers and Ginders. We had a family prayer and exchanged gifts. In addition to what we had brought for them, we had many gifts for the Brubakers from family and friends in the United States. During this time of opening gifts, little Allen would always bring his gift to Martha to have her help him open it. She loved it!

During our days in Bangkok we had quality time with John and Kathy. They are brilliant young people who are highly motivated to serve our Lord and our church. We had in-depth discussions and good prayer times.

The Brubakers say that as they share with others who are working in Thailand, they agree that it takes about 10 years to understand the language and culture of this great country.

The country is 95 percent Buddhist. Only 1 percent are Christian. But even here, our motto from Hong Kong rings true: "You can go nowhere where Jesus is not!"

The Brubakers and Miss Johnson surely need and deserve our prayers as they serve in a situation different from any other.

Henry and Martha Ginder visited Thailand during their 1988-89 trip to various Brethren in Christ mission points.

God at work in our world

The shared meal

Thelma Book—Kitakyushu, Japan

A contingent of teachers, students, and the president himself from a sister school in the south of Korea were recently on the campus of Orio Joshi Gakuen, the Christian school where Doyle teaches. They came for a top-notch volleyball competition, which they easily swept.

After the competition, a group of us were invited to a special dinner with the visitors. The meal was a treat, but communication was difficult. Only the president of the school, Mr. Kan, could understand Japanese and some English, so everything had to pass through him. I don't think he got very much to eat! My attempts to communicate with the young man next to me only served to embarrass him, so I soon stopped trying. President Kan is of the generation which *had* to learn Japanese because of the edict of the wartime Japanese occupation forces.

In retrospect, as I think about all those faces around that table—Koreans and Japanese with their long history of wars and subsequent bitterness, plus two Americans who would as well have been considered Japan's enemies not too long ago—sitting intermixed in friendship, I am thankful to Jesus. He heals the wounds of war and oppression, turning enemies into friends and bringing reconciliation on deeper levels. God's Spirit is still at work in our world in spite of what newspapers and television reports tell us.

God's planning

Phil Thuma—Macha Mission Hospital, Zambia

The old year ended with a busy week. On Wednesday, while I was in Choma doing eye clinic work, Elaine radioed to Nahumba Mission with a message that I should call her when I could. Someone carried the message to me at Choma Hospital. So at lunchtime, I took a break and went to Nahumba to call.

The story was that Doreen Miller, who had been bedfast with morning sickness much of the previous few weeks, had developed a left femoral thrombophlebitis (blood clot in the leg). There was a little bit of heparin (a blood-

thinning drug which I had brought from the States 12 years ago!) in stock, but not enough to last very long. So while I was in Choma, I called Mtshabezi Hospital in Zimbabwe and a supplier of mission hospitals in London to try to get more as quickly as possible. (Editor's note—the members of the Africa tour group led by Louis and Ruth Cober were able to take a supply of heparin with them in late February for Doreen's use.)

The next day Doreen was started on a continuous intravenous infusion using an i.v. pump that Dr. Lester Mann had brought to Zambia at the start of his term just last September. Already her leg is much better, and we trust that the crisis has passed. (Editor's note—Doreen developed a second clot, this one in her left calf, shortly after her first week of treatment ended. But this time, with the treatment protocol and apparatus already established, it was a fairly easy matter to administer another course. At this date, she is well and beginning to get back to some hospital work again.)

An interesting sidelight shows God's care in a special way. Pharmacist Dean Parry decided to charge up the battery and inverter he had for the not-yet-arrived pharmacy computer. He had gotten it as data insurance against a power failure. The very first night Doreen was on the pump, the electricity went off. But the divine prompting paid off. They were able to plug the i.v. pump into the inverter and run the 120-volt pump off a 12-volt battery!

Rebuilding and more

Premi Kachchhap—Madhipura Christian Hospital, Bihar, India

We had very nice Christmas celebrations. This year all of the staff took part in everything. We even had a lovely feast on New Year's Day after church.

Perhaps you have heard that our church wall was cracked due to the severe earthquake on August 21, 1988. We collected about 20,000 *rupees* and began to rebuild. It was wonderful to see all the staff and the children of the community working together and thereby saving a considerable cost for labor. We also extended the church building. The walls are now five feet high, and still

the work goes on. My heart is full of thanks to see the unity and determination to build the church as soon as possible with even a small amount of money. We are indeed thankful to God.

Urgent prayer

Devee Boyd—Mtshabezi Mission Hospital, Zimbabwe

Have you ever had the opportunity to sit in a room full of answered prayer? Such was our privilege one evening in January when our new staff members gathered for an evening of fellowship.

In addition to the four registered nurses who arrived late last year, Dr. Art Dick and his wife, Helen, have also joined us in ministry here at Mtshabezi. We were also blessed by the short-term help given by Dr. Don Minter and his wife, Marty, who did some teaching at Ekuphileni Bible Institute. Don's presence allowed me to help Art break into the routines here as well as teach student nurses and a fourth-year medical student who are with us now.

Certainly, the Lord has abundantly answered our prayers in providing this much needed additional staff. But as I was sitting and pondering this blessing, I was struck by this thought: have I prayed as earnestly for additions to God's family as I have for needed staff?

So often over the last several years, when we have been physically pushed and emotionally drained, our hearts would plead almost constantly with the Lord for more personnel. Why don't I have such sensitivity and intense concern to see the addition of others into the kingdom?

I think that I am just beginning to understand what it means to pray without ceasing. It seems to me that the Holy Spirit wants us to be feeling about the spiritual needs of those around us in just the way we pled with him for staff: fully aware of the needs that exist; physically strained with concern that those needs be met; mentally meeting the challenge that is there. This may be a part of what it means to pray without ceasing—praying with the very fibers of our whole being constantly aware of the Spirit's leading us in intercession and petition.

Zambia peace seminar focuses on church's role

"The Role of the Church in Peace Initiative" served as the theme for a five-day-regional peace seminar at David Livingstone Teachers' College, Livingstone, Zambia, sponsored by the International Mennonite Peace Committee.

The number of participants was 17—8 from Zimbabwe, 8 from Zambia, and 1 from South Africa (representing the South African Council of Churches Justice Desk).

Consideration was given to regional reports on churches' peace roles in various regions, the historical background of the World Council of Churches, the role of International Mennonite Peace Committee, and the future of the church in peace education.

Each day opened with a devotional and either a study paper or a presentation of questions for group discussion.

Concerning conscientious objection, it was noted that this would not be granted in any African government setting. We found out that although most African governments can be accused of indifference toward conscientious objection, the truth of this belief cannot be established, as it has not been tried.

We therefore decided to urge all Christian groups, organizations, and churches, where genuine objectors are identified, to help formulate provisions for alternative service. However, such provision should not be used as an escape door if there is not genuine conviction for such service.

Regional reports were given on Christian organizations engaged in peace initiatives. These include national Christian councils, fellowships, and denominations.

It was learned with much appreciation that the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe is represented in a group of heads of denominations who meet occasionally with government officials to resolve issues in pursuit of peace in that country.

The real issues in Zimbabwe were dissident uprisings against government forces and the suspicion by the government that churches were aiding the dissidents. Churches, for their part, suspected the government of moving to socialism and atheistic communism.

Hence, the need for dialogue between

government and the church, which has fostered acceptable relationships.

In Zambia the introduction of scientific socialism was a real issue of conflict. The church in Zambia rejected it and convinced the government to shelve or change its plan. A seminar was organized by the president, the party, and government on one hand and the churches on the other.

A committee of six representing the Christian Council of Zambia, Zambia Episcopal Conference, and Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia meets occasionally to monitor policies and, when necessary, to appeal to the conscience of the churches to respond to any situation which would have an adverse effect on the church and society.

On the question of social and political justice, the seminar observed that during the colonial past it was difficult for the people to distinguish between the colonizer and the church, as the church seemed part and parcel of colonial development.

The struggle for freedom also used methods not acceptable to us.

The church's role in any of these situations should be prophetic. We should be aligned with no particular group or power bloc, but should be instruments for peace by providing concrete and well-researched options [1 Thessalonians 5:13, Hebrews 12:14, Matthew 5:9].

Dealing with social justice, we should take into consideration that attitudes toward issues can be as murderous for a Christian as taking arms. It is therefore the duty of the church and the Christian to create an atmosphere, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 13, which has "healing in its wings."

A question on tax payment was raised—whether a Christian should pay

tax when he has no say in its expenditure? The Bible teaches that all governments are God-ordained and we should therefore give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.

Seminar participants felt that to single out war as an area where tax money should not be used is unrealistic, as governments use money collected from taxpayers in many unacceptable ways.

In the area of our support for the freedom struggle, the Bible encourages us to feed even our enemies. But feeding, sheltering, and clothing the struggling and displaced masses is our responsibility without promoting violence by funding the purchases of arms and ammunition.

It was resolved that we should have contact persons in various regions to feed information on the development of peace or roadblocks to peace, so that ways can be found to promote it.

The first two persons appointed were Dennis Mweetwa Sinwaabana of Choma, Zambia, and Emmanuel Chidziva of Harare, Zimbabwe. Others were to be added.

It was recommended that regional peace conferences be scheduled about every two years, with the next one to be in December 1989, at a place to be determined later.

Philip Mudenda, Brethren in Christ member of the International Mennonite Peace Committee (a subcommittee of Mennonite World Conference), coordinated the seminar with assistance from the staff of the teachers' college and from Marian Buckwalter, Zambia country representative for Mennonite Central Committee.—*reported by Philip Mudenda, Chilanga, Zambia.* ■

MCC-financed corn grinder helps 160 Mexican families

The sun is just beginning to peep over the mountaintops as a stream of women, pails of cooked corn in hand, make their way up to a steep dirt road in the hillside community of La Cruz in the town of Gomez Farias, Mexico.

Their destination—a small, concrete building that houses a corn mill. The mill was installed with the help of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) loan and under the initiative of former MCC employee Carlos Diaz. Diaz is a member of the San Juan Mennonite Church in Mexico City.

The mill, operated by a group of four families, serves about 160 families daily. Evelia Feliciano is a typical user of the mill. She cooks and grinds about three kilograms (six and one-half pounds) of corn daily to make tortillas, the mainstay of the family's diet.

Before the La Cruz mill began operating in July 1988, Evelia walked farther and waited longer to have her corn ground. Now she saves about a half hour each day—three and one-half precious hours weekly for a busy homemaker with young children. ■

Church News

Please don't let your Visitor reporting be forgotten in the summer months. We would be delighted to hear from churches who have not previously sent news, especially those west of the Mississippi.

Allegheny Conference

The **Air Hill** congregation Chambersburg, Pa., held an Apr. 29 Christian education seminar with Ken Letner. Ken also spoke in Sunday services. • Irving Parker was revival speaker in late April for the **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa. Charles and Ruth Winger talked about their China tour on May 3. • The Mountain Anthem Choir gave an afternoon concert May 7 for the **Canoe Creek** congregation, Hollidaysburg, Pa. • On May 7 the youth and junior choirs of the **Carlisle**, Pa., congregation presented the musical "Oh, Jonah." On Apr. 21, 22 persons of the Keenagers group took a bus tour of Lancaster County.

The youth had an evening service on Apr. 16 for the **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., with the film "A Man Called Norman." Five persons were baptized and 11 received into membership in April. • On Apr. 9 and 16, the **Chambersburg**, Pa., congregation viewed the Zig Zigar four-part film series "Raising Positive Kids in a Negative World." • On Apr. 15, the **Cumberland Valley** congregation, Dillsburg, Pa., hosted the Board for Brotherhood Concerns "Respecting Human Life" seminar with resource persons Randy Basinger and Lenora Stern. May was Family Life Month featuring a video series by Larry Crabb.

The **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., began a training series on Apr. 16 for teachers and workers with young children. Pastor Lynn Thrush attended the Christian Holiness Assoc. meeting in Indianapolis in April. • The **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., hosted speaker Bob Hempy Apr. 20-23. Six persons became members on Apr. 30. • The senior highs of the **Grantham**, Pa., church had a progressive dinner on Apr. 2. A support group for separated and divorced persons was started in April. The music of John Ness Beck was featured by the chancel choir on Apr. 9. • On Apr. 4, the **Hanover**, Pa., congregation had a Mother's Day banquet for couples only. Dana and Judy Crider, missionaries from India, spoke on Apr. 16.

On May 7, the youth choir of the **Hollowell** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., presented the musical "If They Are to Know," about a teen who tried to commit suicide. • The **Locust Grove** congregation, York, Pa., received an award at Regional Conference in recognition of their 25 percent increase in Sunday school attendance in 1988. Pauline Allison spoke at the mother-daughter banquet, May 18. • Pastor Hock of the **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa., attended the Billy Graham School of Evangelism, May 8-12, in Ashville, N.C. • Evangelist Jack Yost spoke Apr. 2-7 to the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation. Abe and Mildred Yoder talked about their experiences in Zambia on Apr. 19.

The **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., church board is considering creating the position of Coordinator of Lay Ministries to assist the pastors in recruitment and record keeping. Ground breaking for a new building was postponed to the Spring of 1990. • Rev. and Mrs. Avery Musser celebrated their 50th

wedding anniversary on Apr. 8 in the fellowship hall of the **Messiah Village** church, Mechanicsburg. Gifts in their honor could be made to the Messiah Village Endowment Fund. The Old Order River Brethren visited for a special service on Apr. 23. • Terry Burton was revival speaker Apr. 2-9 for the **Montgomery** congregation, near Upton, Pa.

A three-day spiritual life series was led Apr. 7-9 by Arthur Climenhaga for the **Morning Hour Chapel** congregation, East Berlin, Pa. A sing-along with Doris Heckman and Charlotte Hetrick was Apr. 23. • The junior youth of the **Mt. Rock** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa., profited \$267 from an April bake sale. On Apr. 30, Terry and Doris Ortman were guests for Spring Sunday School Rally Day. • May 3 was the annual awards and crafts night for the Pioneer Girls, the mothers, and the pals of the **New Guilford** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. "Kids Praise 5" was presented on Apr. 22, 23.

The **Paramount** congregation, Hagerstown, Md., celebrated their 20th anniversary on Mar. 12. Former pastors J. Ralph Wenger, James Ernst, and Bishop Kipe attended. A record attendance of 233 was set. The children of Lester (Bud) and Annie Morgan hosted a 60th wedding anniversary celebration on Apr. 30. • On April 30 the Dixie Melody Boys gave an evening concert for the **Pleasant View** congregation, Red Lion, Pa. • Delmas Hock was revival speaker Apr. 10-16 for the **Roseglen** congregation, Duncannon, Pa. • The Christ's Crusaders of the **Spring Hope** congregation, Bedford, Pa., sponsored two nights of music recently: Feb. 26, with The Gospel Truth; Apr. 23, with The Gospel Messengers. • On Apr. 15, the **Van Lear** congregation, Williamsport, Md., enjoyed a meal and concert by the Wingert family.

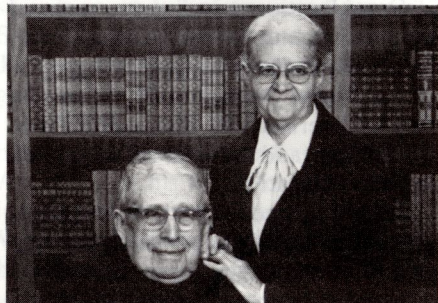
Atlantic Conference

On Apr. 22, the **Community Bible Chapel**, Sarasota, Fla., was involved in the Christian Service Fair, offering fund-raising booths to several ministries such as Agape Homes for Youth and Habitat for Humanity. • The **Cross Roads** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., enjoyed fun, learning, and worship at Retreat '89 Apr. 14-16 at Kenbrook Retreat Center. Missionaries Fred and Grace Holland spoke in the Apr. 23 service. • The **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation is taking advantage of a traveling video library service.

The children's clubs of the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., had a skating party on Apr. 1. The church hosted the Kenbrook Ladies' Auxiliary spaghetti supper on Apr. 15. • The choir of the **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa., gave the cantata "Jesus Is Coming" on Apr. 23. Six persons were received into membership the same day. • A diet, devotion, and exercise class began Apr. 2 at the **Holden Park** church, Orlando, Fla. Paul Hostetler spoke on Apr. 16. • Apr. 29 was spring clean-up day at the **Hummelstown**, Pa., church. Louis Cober of the Mt. Joy missions office spoke on Apr. 16. • The **Lancaster**, Pa., congregation had a spiritual gifts emphasis on Apr. 16 and 23. An all-church skate was held Apr. 22. Eighteen persons were baptized in April.

The Careers Class of the **Manor** church, Mount-

ville, Pa., gave an evening service called "Don't Worry, We're Happy," comprised of music, skits, and a sermon. Walter Winger preached in the Apr. 23 morning service. Roger Lentz has become part-time Director of Music Ministries, beginning June 1. • On Apr. 16, the **Mastersonville** congregation, Manheim, Pa., enjoyed a talent night. Dana and Judy Crider and Donald Vayo spoke in missions services on May 7. • On Apr. 13, the Adult Bible Class of the **Mt. Pleasant** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., shared a service and ice cream social with the Paxton Street Home in Harrisburg. Don and Esther Martin were featured Apr. 22-23 in a family life conference.



The children of Amos and Lizzie (Ginder) Shonk hosted a reception Mar. 25 at The Gathering Place, Mt. Joy, Pa., to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. The Shonks are members of the Mt. Pleasant congregation. • The church board of the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation has expressed concern for the environment by requesting more limited use of paper and styrofoam at church functions. The congregation sponsored a bus trip to the Apr. 29 Phillies game. • The **Pequea** congregation, Lancaster, Pa., had a Resolving Conflicts Seminar on Apr. 2 with David Brubaker of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns.

Pastor John Arthur and Eva Brubaker of the **Refton**, Pa., congregation began a three-month sabbatical leave on May 10. They are traveling in Japan, Thailand, India, Spain, England, Israel, and the U.S. • Evangelistic services were held Apr. 12-16 at the **Shenks** church, Elizabethtown, Pa., with John Shock from Shippensburg. • On Apr. 16, Joe Hyatt spoke to the singles group of the **Silverdale**, Pa., church on making the most of being single. Four members were received on May 7.

The **Skyline View** congregation, Harrisburg, Pa., hosted an evening community worship service with six other congregations on Apr. 16. The offering was used for an emergency fund for people in need of food, fuel, medical care, etc. • The Bucks-Mont Brass Ensemble provided music for the Apr. 9 service of the **Souderton**, Pa., church. A group of men traveled to Kenbrook Camp on Apr. 8 and 15 to help construct a log cabin. • Paul Hostetler spoke in the Apr. 2 morning service of the **Stowe**, Pa., congregation. • "Touch the World Through Prayer" was the theme of the 30th annual meeting of the Atlantic Missions Prayer Fellowship held at the United Christian Church in Annville, Pa., on Apr. 22. Presiding was Janet Peifer. Keynote speakers were Fred and Grace Holland. Newly elected officers are Miriam Stern, president; Ruth Zook, vice-president; Shari Steager, secretary; and Kelly Winters, treasurer.

Canadian Conference

Rev. Ross Nigh recently spoke to the **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont. • Albert Davis Israeli of Chosen People Ministries spoke on Apr. 16 to the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., on "The Jewish Roots of Christianity." A missionary conference was hosted Apr. 28-30 with the **Oak Ridges**, Ont., congregation. • The **Lakeside Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., recently sponsored an "All-Star Weekend" with retired hockey player Paul Henderson, now ministering with Campus Crusade. The weekend also included music and other speakers. • On Apr. 8, the **Massey Place** congregation, Saskatoon, Sask., sponsored an "I love my church" dinner for all teens and adults. Profits received were applied to the fund for future development and the debt reduction fund.

The **North East Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., began a 10-week study Apr. 25 on "Know What You Believe and Why." The adult fellowship planned a miniature golf outing on May 6. • The **Oak Ridges**, Ont., congregation has decided to discontinue their bus ministry but to continue to arrange for transportation for those in need of a ride. • On Apr. 2, the Olson family led the **Prince Albert**, Sask., congregation, in worship and singing. The church enjoyed an adult fellowship night on Apr. 14. • On Apr. 30, Tim and Martha Giles, missionaries to Venezuela, shared with the **Ridgemount** congregation, Hamilton, Ont.

The **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont., recently gave Pastor Silvestro and his family a love gift trip to Florida. A Bible conference with Luke Keefer, Sr., was May 5-7. • On Apr. 15, "The Children of the Lord" presented the musical "Daniel, Darius and DeLion" to the **Sherkston**, Ont., congregation. A mother-daughter-sister-friend potluck supper was May 2. • The **Springvale** congregation, Hagersville, Ont., had mission emphases on Apr. 16 and Apr. 29—May 3 with Lou Cober and missionary speakers from India, Thailand, Alaska, and Costa Rica.

The annual spring tea of the **Stayner**, Ont., church ladies was Apr. 13 with personal testimonies and musician Mary Ellen Hall. • Toronto Blue Jay and Montreal Expo Chaplain Dave Fisher spoke on Apr. 14 at the Father-Son banquet of the **Wainfleet**, Ont., church. • On Apr. 9 the River Brethren from Niagara Christian College ministered in music to the **Welland**, Ont., congregation. Fred and Madeline Dilts celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house on Apr. 16. Youth of the church are doing work with Missions Outreach International this summer: Danalyn Arnett, in Belize; Jessica Leadley, Zambia; and Debbie Muraca, Fiji Islands.

On Apr. 29, the **Westheights** congregation, Kitchener, Ont., hosted the Board for Congregational Life music seminar and evening concert, "I Will Celebrate." The church also was the location for the Apr. 14-15 Regional Conference. • A leave of absence has been granted by the Board for Congregational Life to Sandi Hannigan from June 16—Aug. 21. She will participate in the Brethren in Christ Latin America Music Ministry Team sponsored by the Board for World Missions. Cheryl Giles is serving as temporary contact person.

Central Conference

The **Bethel** congregation, Cassopolis, Mich., hosted the Michiana missions conference Apr. 7-9. A Saturday evening meal was served to 77

Sheron Brunner named administrative director of Lifeline Ministries

The Board of Directors of Lifeline Ministries, Inc., is pleased to announce the appointment of Sheron Brunner as administrative director of Lifeline. Sheron will assume this position as of June 1, 1989.

Sheron was most recently employed as a financial counselor with Massachusetts Mutual in Wichita, Kansas. While in Wichita, Sheron attended the Wichita Brethren in Christ fellowship. She was president of the board of the Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center and served as one of their crisis counselors. Sheron is also a Brethren in Christ lay minister in the Midwest Conference.

The Lifeline Board of Directors also announces, with regret, the resignation of Leslie Harvel as director of the Heaven's Gate Women's Shelter. Following her leave of absence in January, Leslie informed the board that she will not be



returning to San Francisco for personal reasons. Leslie plans to be married this summer, and will be settling in Florida. The Lifeline board is negotiating with a candidate to assume the ministry position at Lifeline by September 1.

The Lifeline board requests your prayers and support as we work to secure an occupancy permit and resume the much needed ministry of a shelter for battered and homeless women.

Midwest Conference

On Apr. 2, the **Abilene**, Ks., congregation viewed the video "A Day in the Life of an African Woman." The congregation hosted the April joint fifth Sunday service with soloist Brad Hartenstine. • The **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Okla., received a certificate of appreciation from the governor for participation in the "Great Trash-out" on Apr. 8. The congregation cleaned two miles along Highway 33. The topic of an Apr. 23 Sunday school teachers and assistants fellowship was "Making Contact with your Students." • The youth of the **Mountain View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Colo., planned a hoagie sale for Apr. 8 with proceeds going to summer camp expenses.

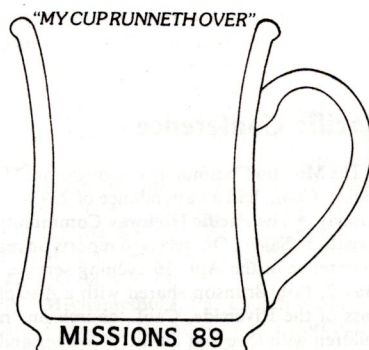
The **Oklahoma City**, Okla., congregation enjoyed family bowling on Apr. 15. A garage-bake-crafts sale to benefit the building fund was planned for Apr. 21-22. • On Apr. 9, the Berean student choir sang at the **Rosebank** church, Hope, Ks. A roller skating party was planned for Apr. 27. • On Apr. 14, Tina Ediger gave a dramatic monologue about her parents' life in Russia at the women's supper of the **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Ks.

Pacific Conference

The **Moreno Community** congregation, Moreno Valley, Calif., had an attendance of 239 on Easter Sunday. • The **Pacific Highway Community** congregation, Salem, Or., received reports on regional conference in the Apr. 16 evening service. • On May 2, Bob Brunson shared with a discipleship class of the **Riverside**, Calif., church on "raising children with love and limits." • Walter and Lois Winger, currently of Browncroft Community Church, Rochester, N.Y., have accepted the pastorate of the **Upland**, Calif., church.

The Year of the Overflowing Cup

by Merle Brubaker
Director of Stewardship



"Where did the idea for the overflowing cup come from?" Veteran missionary Kathryn Engle saw a poster at the annual meeting of the Pacific Conference and was sincerely curious.

"From Karen Brubaker Haldeman, at the missions office," I replied.

With a twinkle in her eye, Mrs. Engle responded, "Tell her to stay close to God, so that she can get more good ideas like that!"

"The Year of the Overflowing Cup" symbolizes so many things that God seems to be saying to us as Brethren in Christ in North America. There are signs that God is ready to "pour out so much blessing" that we "will not have room enough for it" (Malachi 3:10). What are the signs?

1. Calls for renewal.

Last year our General Secretary, Dr. R. Donald Shafer, asked each of the denominational ministries to take special time for prayer and thought about renewal.

At General Conference a special call to the church for prayer and renewal was adopted. The action asked members of Conference, in total dependence upon the Holy Spirit, to affirm and accept the call of 2 Chronicles 7:14.

2. A growing interest in worship.

Once called "the missing jewel of the evangelical church," corporate worship is being regarded as an essential and primary function of the local congregation.

For many, the best thing about General Conference last year was the experience of worshipping God together. Our 1989 Calendar and the

"Accent on Worship" papers continue to remind us. We've come a long way since the routine prayer in Sunday school was "Lord, bless the after service and help us to get something out of it." We are learning to come and give God our worship. When we worship God truly, we give ourselves wholly.

3. Whole life stewardship.

Even our culture is helping us on this one. Spontaneous comments from athletes like "Dr. J" and Orel Hershisser, and planned speeches like President Bush's inaugural address, include "stewardship."

In lectures and in his new book, *Why Settle for More and Miss the Best?*, Christian futurist Tom Sine invites us to "whole life stewardship."

Whole life stewardship is another description of renewal. Alvin Burkholder, our first employed Director of Stewardship, often noted the connection between revival and giving. True revival leads to giving and true giving leads to revival.

Money is "stored up life." Like the Macedonians Paul used as an example for the Corinthians, when we give ourselves to God we give our whole life. That includes, of course, our "stored up life"—all of it, not just 10 percent.

As we worshipfully manage all the resources God trusts to us, he will help us to know, individually and corporately, how and when to invest his resources. Recently I saw reports in two church bulletins showing congregations well ahead of budget.

I see signs that some people are "staying close to the Lord," the Shepherd. Already some cups are overflowing.

For the Record

Births

Bowman: Chelsea Elizabeth, Mar. 23; J. Paul and Deborah (Saylor) Bowman, Manor congregation, Pa.

Bucher: Stephen Caleb, Feb. 23; Scott and Cindy Bucher, Cumberland Valley congregation, Pa.

Byler: Kathryn Janette, Apr. 13; Bruce and Rhoda (Kindy) Byler, Bethel congregation (Merill), Mich.

Cashell: Benjamin Paul, Apr. 10; Paul and Nadene (Meyers) Cashell, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

Chesnut: Daniel Ray, Apr. 21; Robert and Vickie (Davis) Chesnut, Hollowell congregation, Pa.

Conrad: Abigail Jane, Mar. 7; Rick and Sara Conrad, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Craun: Emily Jean, Apr. 4; Keith and Sheryl (Byers) Craun, Perkiomen Valley congregation, Pa.

Cunningham: Melissa Renee, May 1; Wayne and Donna (Wiles) Cunningham, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Cunningham: Virginia Mae, Mar. 23; James Cunningham and Sonya Miller, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

Diffenderfer: Ryan James, Mar. 18; Brian and Karen D. (Shertzer) Diffenderfer, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

Fals: Courtney Leigh, Mar. 20; John and Carol (Warner) Fals, Manor congregation, Pa.

Flemming: Kaitlyn Rose-Ann, Apr. 12; Joe and Darlene (Keller) Flemming, Sherkston congregation, Ont.

Furr: Nicholas Andrew, Apr. 19; Karl and Lisa Furr, Hanover congregation, Pa.

Gornick: Brandon David, Apr. 26; Bill and Bonnie Gornick, Palmyra congregation, Pa.

Hoover: Kara Jo, Apr. 11; Eric and Kathy (Bebermeyer) Hoover, Zion congregation, Ks.

Kiss: Ian Michael, Mar. 28; John and Briget Kiss, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Rosentrater: Nathan Mark, Mar. 21; David and Sabina (Frey) Rosentrater, Bremen, Ind.

Stanley: Amy Christine, Apr. 6; Ken and Glenace (Frey) Stanley, Aztec, N. M. (Zion congregation, Ks.)

Thomas: Brianna Dawyne, Feb. 14; Brian and Gwen (Landis) Thomas, New Covenant congregation, Pa.

Wenger: Janelle Marie, Apr. 19; Larson and Marlene Wenger, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

Worman: John Hostetter, Feb. 24; Craig and Diana Worman, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Zurn: Hannah April, Apr. 14; Mike and Karen Zurn, Morrison congregation, Ill.

Weddings

Allen-Barlett: Kim Louise, daughter of Harold and Gwynneith Bartlett, Niagara Falls, Ont., and Bradley John, son of Walter Allen, Ridgeway, Ont., and the late Carol Ann Winger, Mar. 18 at the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Leonard J. Chester officiating.

Brubaker-Strauss: Dorothy Strauss and Samuel O. Brubaker, both of Elizabethtown, Pa., Apr. 11, in the home of the bride with Rev. Kenneth L. Engle officiating.

Forry-Wiker: Courtney M. Wiker, daughter of Ms. Amy K. Wiker and Theodore J. Wiker, Millheim, Pa., and Brian H., son of Henry and the late Theda Forry, Mt. Joy, Pa., Apr. 22, at the Mt. Pleasant Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Jerel Book and Rev. John Long officiating.

Landis-Thomas: Bettina L., daughter of Ivan and Martha Thomas, Lancaster, Pa., and J. Kevin, son of James and Dorothy Landis, Lancaster, Apr. 2, at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Hawbaker and Bishop David Thomas officiating.

Martin-Meyers: Lee Ann, daughter of Gary and Elaine Meyers, Greencastle, Pa., and Wade Robert, son of Arthur and Shirley Martin, Belle Mead, N.J., Apr. 8, at the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church.

Peters-Noel: Deirdre Lynn Noel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Runyon, Newburg, Pa., and Shawn Lynn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Peters, Shippensburg, Pa., Apr. 8, at the Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Roger Witter officiating.

Rowe-Shuck: Doris Shuck, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Peck, Greencastle, Pa., and Ronald, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rowe, Waynesboro, Pa., Apr. 7, at the Five Forks Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur Besecker officiating.

Royer-Stine: Sharon Lynn, daughter of James and Sallie Stine, Jacksonville, Fla., and Samuel Wayne, son of Wayne and Gloria Royer, Lock Haven, Pa., Apr. 29, at the Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ Church with Pastor John L. Bundy officiating.

Trostle-Newhouse: Dendra Ellen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Newhouse, Newville, Pa., and Christopher Allen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Trostle, Dillsburg, Pa., Apr. 8 at the Cumberland Valley Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Ray Bert officiating.

Obituaries

Cubitt: Florence Olive Mae (Weston) Cubitt, born Mar. 10, 1918, died Apr. 3. She is survived by her husband, Gerald; 3 sons, Garth, Wayne, and Arleigh; 3 daughters, Elaine Climenhaga, June Cober, and Julia; 18 grandchildren; a great-grandchild; and 3 brothers, Clifford, Gilbert, and Oscar. Florence attended the Stayner, Ont., congregation for the past 30 years. The funeral service was held at the church with Rev. Darrell Winger officiating. Interment was in Stayner Union Cemetery.

Davis: Roy W. Davis, born Nov. 11, 1920, the son of the late Neal and Sadie Smith Davis, died Feb. 21. Surviving are his wife Esther Mary (Lauver) to whom he had been married for 43 years; a daughter, Karen Rossman; three grandchildren; a brother, Norman S.; and a sister, Elsie Smith. He was preceded in death by a son, Donald Lee. Roy had been a welder at Sellersville Steel

Fabricating Co. for 20 years before retiring in 1982. The memorial service was held at the Souderton, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in White Marsh Memorial Park, Bucks County, Pa.

Fohringer: Ruth F. Fohringer, born Dec. 25, 1915, the daughter of the late Rev. Stephen W. and Barbara H. (Forry) Heisey, died Mar. 29. Surviving are her husband, Charles; three daughters, Anna Ruth Smoyer, Eunice Paraiso, and Dorcas Summers; two sons, Carl, and Kenneth; nine grandchildren; a sister, Beulah Heisey; two half-sisters, Mary Heisey, and Ethel Bundy; a brother, Aaron; and a half-brother, J. Wilmer Heisey. Ruth had worked in the cafeteria at Penns Valley Area High School and in the housing division at Penn State, retiring in 1978. She was a member of the Colyer congregation where she had served as a Sunday school teacher and VBS worker. She was a member of the Dorcas sewing circle of the area Brethren in Christ churches and of the Women's Missionary Society. The funeral service was held at the church with Rev. Paul C. Smucker and Rev. David D. Freese officiating. Interment was in Zion Hill Cemetery, Centre Hall, Pa.

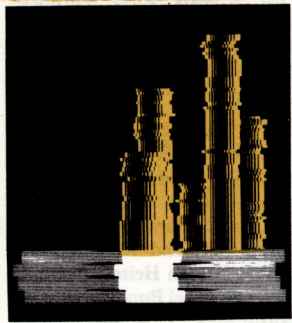
Helfrick: Ralph E. Helfrick, born Sept. 12, 1934, died Mar. 27. Surviving are his wife Mary Jane (Martin); three daughters, Glenda Shelly, Genevieve Thrush, and Gloria; six brothers, Isaac, Asa, Samuel, Lester, Robert, and John; three sisters, Anna Stepler, Martha Shives, and Bertha Lehman; and two grandchildren. Ralph was a member of the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church and a deacon for eight years. The service was held at the church with Rev. Barton Starr, Rev. Russell Martin, and Rev. Charles R. Martin officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Loobey: Ellen L. Loobey, born Apr. 8, 1926, died Mar. 14. She is survived by her husband James; and four sons. Ellen attended the Skyline View congregation where the funeral service was held with Rev. John Reitz officiating. Interment was at Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens, Harrisburg, Pa.

Rosado: Jason B. Rosado, born June 17, 1974, the son of Carlos and Ruth (Lehman) Rosado died Apr. 8. Surviving with his parents are three sisters, Mashawn, Angelyn, and Audreanna; and grandparents, Robert and Edith Lehman, and Jonny and Ana Arroyo. Jason was a ninth grader at Northern High School; a member of the junior varsity soccer team; and a member of the Bible quiz team of the Mechanicsburg, Pa., church. The funeral service was held at the church with Rev. Steve Lehman and Rev. Ken Hepner officiating. Interment was in Mechanicsburg Cemetery.

Stern: Donald E. Stern, born Oct. 14, 1934, the son of Samuel K. and Barbara (Stoner) Stern, died Apr. 10. Surviving are his wife Vada (Imler); a son, Donnie; a daughter, Connie Keller; 3 stepdaughters, Barbara Detwiler, Linda Keller, and Lou Ann Wyant; his mother; 3 brothers; and 10 grandchildren. Donald worked for a division of Chemical Tank Lines, Inc. He was a member of the Martinsburg, Pa., congregation where the funeral service was held with Rev. Earl E. Herr, Rev. Robert L. Keller, and Rev. Chalmer L. Naugle officiating. Interment was in the Fairview Cemetery, Martinsburg.

Suhr: George R. Suhr, born Feb. 24, 1918, died Apr. 14. He is survived by his wife, Emma; a son; 2 sisters; and 10 brothers. George attended the Skyline View congregation where the funeral service was held with Rev. John G. Reitz officiating. Interment was in the Mt. Laurel Cemetery, Pikesville, Pa.



THE JACOB ENGLE FOUNDATION SERIES

A ministry of service

by Peter H. von Keyserling

The title of this article is redundant. The meaning of ministry is service. Thus this title reads "A Service of Service." We use the word ministry so casually in church language that we often do not think of the meaning of the word. The images that the word brings up are that of a minister, of some religious or spiritual activity being performed by someone else. Most of us have not come to grips with the fact that each of us is called as a Christian to live a life of ministry (service). The shape of the service varies with individual gifts and the opportunities that God presents to us.

The Jacob Engle Foundation's initial service to the church was the management of the church loan funds. These loan funds are provided by church members who wish to make "double duty" investments. Thus a service must also be provided to these investing church members, who make church loans possible! Both these services have been described in prior articles of this series. They are the primary services (ministry) assigned to the foundation by the church. However, these two principal functions have given birth to other financial ministries.

One area that has grown from the church loan fund opportunities is financial counseling provided to churches regarding debt management, to individuals preparing to make the major investment in the purchase of a home, and to other ministries of the church. The Planned Giving Department of the church is another outgrowth of working with the investors who have wanted to do more than invest their resources in the work of the kingdom. These investors have been in a position to leave both current gifts to the church as well as

future gifts. The foundation was assigned the responsibility to oversee this department and fund its expenses during its formative years. The Planned Giving Department generates trusts of which the church in some form is a beneficiary. Therefore the foundation has a Trust Management Department which manages the financial aspect of a trust.

The church also has charged the denomination's Pension Fund with the responsibility of overseeing the Brotherhood Health Plan. The Pension Fund trustees select a health plan administrator according to rates and services offered. The Jacob Engle Foundation has acted for the selected administrator to collect the health insurance premiums and distribute participant ID cards, information, and assist with claim settlement. Because of this service the church has an excellent health plan at a very reasonable cost compared to the industry.

In addition to nationwide services described briefly above, the foundation also ministers to people having very modest incomes who want to improve their economical position by establishing savings accounts and learning a little about financial management and the time value of money. This service is provided through the voluntary efforts of staff members.

Seven segments of the ministry of the foundation have been mentioned. Let me list them so that they are clearly identified.

1. Loan fund administration services
2. Investment administration services
3. Financial debt service counseling services
 - a. churches
 - b. individuals
 - c. church agencies
4. Gift planning services
5. Trust management services
6. Health Plan administration services
7. Money management counseling services

It may be helpful to explain the financial debt counseling services, gift planning services, and trust management services. The financial debt service counseling began when a number of individuals and churches were experiencing difficulties repaying their loans and, in some cases, obtaining loans. It is always better to do the counseling to avoid a financial problem rather than to attempt to resolve a present problem. The foundation now carefully reviews each loan application to avoid contributing to a future individual or congregational financial problem. When we are permitted to help, we discuss the financial strengths and weaknesses with a prospective borrower, examining in detail the options and the timing factors, making suggestions which would minimize the risks. Factors such as net worth, equity to debt, cash flow, existing obligations, current budget performance, forecasting future income, etc., are discussed and explained to help develop an understanding of all the factors which affect financial health.

A number of people in the church have appreciated what the Lord has entrusted to their care. They desire to make provisions to return to the Lord's work a portion or all that the Lord has entrusted to them. It is all part of being a good steward. Like the parable of the talents, not only are we to invest wisely what the Lord has entrusted to us, but we are also to plan for its return to him. The Planned Giving Department is designed to assist those individuals who wish to provide for the return of the Lord's resources to the Lord's work. This department can provide helpful information for trust development, charitable remainder annuities, property distributions, etc. Its function is to help the individual and family achieve their aims in the most beneficial way while observing both legal and tax requirements. It is possible to provide the basic information and then look at the results in several different ways to see what provides

Since this article was written, the administration of the Planned Giving Department has been transferred to the Board for Stewardship, with joint support coming from both that board and the foundation. The author is executive director of the Jacob Engle Foundation.

the closest match to the wishes of the individual and family. I was interested to learn that an individual faces two financial challenges in life, wealth accumulation and wealth distribution. Usually the accumulation challenge continues to about age 50, and then the wealth distribution challenge grows in importance and priority. Planned giving can be very helpful in meeting this second challenge effectively.

When an individual desires to make a gift to some part of the church, it is not always feasible to make that gift by writing a check and mailing it to the local church or agency. Often a large financial gift is destructive to a ministry if it is received all at once. Also the donor may wish to provide an annual amount to fund some special part of a ministry. Or perhaps the donor is not in a position to give the principal sum at the present time, but is able to give the income (or interest) from that principal sum for a period of time.

Whenever a gift is to be distributed over a period of time, then the Trust Management Department can provide management services. It is important to note that the money in a trust fund does not belong to the foundation. It belongs to the donor and/or the recipient of the trust. The foundation merely provides the management of the trust for a small annual fee. This fee covers the investing of the trust assets, disbursing monies to the recipient(s), accounting for all the transactions, and reporting the operation of the trust to the donor or designee. It also covers the filing of reports to the federal and state governments where applicable.

In one case a donor wished to have a portion of his estate distributed to a church agency and some to relatives that were behind the "Iron Curtain." At the time the will was made, funds could not be sent directly to recipients behind the Iron Curtain. The donor requested that the trust department find a way to get that portion of the funds to the relatives, and to hold and invest those funds on behalf of the relatives until such time as a way could be found to deliver the funds. Fortunately, by the time the funds were to be disbursed, it was possible to send the funds directly to the relatives.

In another case a husband and wife wanted a portion of their estate to go to their children. However, they thought it wise that the full amount not go to the children until they had reached age 30

continued on page 28

Messiah College News

Messiah graduates the largest class ever

Messiah College graduated its largest class ever at the 79th annual commencement held on Saturday, May 13. Of the 421 graduates of the Class of 1989 to don cap and gown, 194 received Bachelor of Arts and 227 Bachelor of Science degrees. The Management and Business Department has the largest number of graduates with 91. Other leading departments include Behavioral Science with 56 graduates; Education with 52; Language, Literature, and Fine Arts with 45; Natural Sciences with 38; Mathematical Sciences with 37; and Nursing with 33.

The Class of 1989 is as diverse geographically as in area of study, although the vast majority of students—223—come from Pennsylvania. New Jersey with 50 graduates, Maryland with 32, and New York with 30 come in a distant second, third, and fourth. Messiah will graduate students from 23 other states, Canada, the Middle East, Central and South America, the west and east coast of Africa, the Far East, China, Europe, and India.

Of the 421 graduates, 32 were from the Brethren in Christ Church. Following is what some of these BIC graduates had to say about their Messiah experience.

Shelly D. Koch: "These past four years at Messiah have been a growing and learning experience. I have definitely learned more about who I am. There are people here who challenged me to become a better person and Christian. I will always treasure the memories I have of Messiah College."

Vicky L. Seibert: "I think the best part of my stay at Messiah was the special friends. I went to a public high school and the church I attended didn't have any girls my age. So I was really grateful for the Christian friends I made at Messiah."

I also appreciated the interaction the students had with the professors. The professors not only helped with the school work, but also were concerned with other areas of our lives, which was very encouraging."

Diana E. Donat: "My stay here at Messiah went fast, and I'm glad that I made the choice of this college. I liked the size of Messiah. It was big enough to have a lot of activities to get involved in, and I also got to know a lot of people. I had a good four years and enjoyed being involved with music organizations and outreach teams."

May 1989 Brethren in Christ graduates

Ontario, Canada:

Timothy K. Cober; History; Springvale
Anselmo E. Rossi; Psychology; Ridgeway
Kent D. Warkentin; Psychology; Wainfleet

California:

Kim I. Mayer; Chemistry; Seal Beach

North Carolina:

Daryl I. Fulp; Christian Education; Summerfield

Ohio:

Janet E. Heise; Psychology; New Madison
Tery A. Rhoades; Accounting; Pittsburg
Bradley K. Steinbrecher; Biology; Greenville
Carrie D. Stoner; Early Childhood Education; Akron

Pennsylvania:

Beth D. Byers; Family Studies; Chambersburg
Sandy L. Delaney; Mathematics; Greencastle
Diane E. Donat; Elementary Education; Columbia
Kathy A. Egolf; Early Childhood Education; Waynesboro
David A. Erisman; Religion; Columbia
Wanda Musser Fulp; Elementary Education; Mechanicsburg
Kristin S. Garis; Elementary Education; Hatfield
Diane S. Gehres; Elementary Education; Line Lexington
Robert S. Getty; Radio, Television, and Film; Lisburn
Jeffrey K. Herr; Accounting; Manheim
Kristen S. Hoffman; Dietetics; Palmyra
Lawton S. Jacobs; Bible; Fairfield
Steven L. Keller; Radio, Television, and Film; Greencastle
Dwayne A. Kepner; Business Administration; Carlisle
Gary P. Klinger; Human Resource Management; Lititz

continued on page 28

Messiah College . . .

continued from page 27

Shelly D. Koch; Christian Education/
Music; Reading
Monica R. Peters; Family Studies; Lock
Haven
Karen L. Peck; Accounting; Waynes-
boro
Vicky L. Seibert; Accounting; East
Berlin
Mary R. Smith; Nursing; Elizabethtown
Cathy J. Weiland; Elementary Educa-
tion; Port Royal
Avis B. Whitesel; Dietetics; Chambers-
burg
Brent T. Whitesel; Mathematics; Mif-
flintown ■

Ministry of service . . .

continued from page 27

when they supposedly would have an appreciation of large sums of money. The Trust Department was able to carry out those wishes when the husband and wife both died prematurely. The Trust Department can carry out such wishes and the creators of the trusts can rest assured that the trust will not become prey to court and legal manipulations which can sadly deplete the value of the trust.

Perhaps this description of the foundation activities has given a picture of the foundation that you had not had the opportunity to see before. Although the Jacob Engle Foundation is an institution, it is an institution made up of people who are genuinely interested in serving you, members of our church and brotherhood, partners in the Lord's work. In the next article in this series, you will have an opportunity to learn about the people who make up this institution. ■

MCC East Africa Alumni

An MCC East Africa alumni reunion will be held June 29 to July 1, 1990 at Laurelville (Pa.) Mennonite Church Center. Program and registration information will be available closer to the meeting time. For more information contact Lowell Detweiler, MCC East Africa Reunion, Box M, Akron, PA 17501.

Phoebe's Journal

The Chameleon Factor

As a child I was fascinated by the chameleon. Not only was I interested in its slow, deliberate movements, but I was also intrigued by its ability to change color to blend in with its surroundings.

I've thought of the chameleon as I listen to David talk to his family and friends. When he's with us, his accent, vocabulary, and grammar reflect our influence, but when he's with his friends, he shifts to language patterns that match theirs. That means, for example, that the "correct" grammar we generally try to use is replaced by what we consider substandard usage. It's obviously important to him as a means of fitting in. He's disdainful of a friend from school who doesn't eliminate certain school slang terms from his vocabulary when he's at church with another set of friends. David would never be so careless. His church friends might think he's weird—and he couldn't risk that!

As the chameleon changes colors to blend in and avoid detection, David changes his language to survive in his particular sub-culture. Much of his time is spent with people who are very different from our family in background and upbringing. Their speech is one of the more obvious manifestations of that difference. So that he isn't any more conspicuous than necessary, David has learned to talk just like they do. Anyone not knowing him would not be able to tell from his speech when he's with his friends that he's not fully "one of them."

Even though I frequently cringe when he uses bad grammar (and I frequently fail to resist the urge to correct not only him but also his friends), I generally don't have a problem with this fairly harmless means of "fitting in." After all, he knows what's correct, and he's easily able to switch back and forth. Sometimes, however, I am aware that it's not just a matter of adopting for the moment bad grammar or particular voice inflections; he's also likely to use what I have always taught him is "bad language" (profanity, etc.). I'm quite sure, as a result, that he probably says things out of my hearing that conflict with values I've tried to teach him. That bothers me.

These chameleon-like changes in

speech patterns are, I think, a normal phenomenon in children who desperately don't want to be different from their friends. Even adults shift personality a bit to fit in better with whomever we're with at any given time; many of us don't like being odd either. It's part of having social graces; put biblically, I suppose it's part of "becoming all things to all people." But most of us believe that there are limits to our trying to fit in; at some point we will inevitably be different from those around us. This is especially true for Christians.

When I hear David slip and use language that contradicts what we've taught him about right and wrong, I wonder whether he will slip in other ways as well. When he's with his friends or on his own, will he swear freely, smoke, drink, do drugs, have sex outside of marriage, become even more preoccupied with accumulating material possessions, become a fighter pilot in the Air Force? Or is he developing the ability to "just say no" even to things that are often generally acceptable in our society? Fortunately, society is beginning to provide help on some of these issues—like drugs, alcohol, smoking, and promiscuous sex—but on issues like materialism and militarism, we get very little help. Our Christian commitment needs to be strong enough to help us to say no, to dare to be different because we believe that Jesus calls us to something else.

I don't think David has a problem that's much different from anyone else in our culture—child or adult. We all have chameleon-like tendencies which manifest themselves when we feel threatened by the prospect of being conspicuous. Sometimes, of course, taking the path of least resistance and changing our colors, so to speak, is harmless and appropriate. What does it matter, for example, if using double negatives and not matching subjects and verbs make David feel more like his friends? But when blending in means compromising our first loyalty to the kingdom of God and the principles which Jesus lived and taught, then it matters profoundly. Learning the difference and then behaving accordingly is one of the challenges of Christian faith.

Phoebe

Evangelical Visitor

Onesimus

Greetings to you, Epaphroditus, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. May his grace be yours for all your needs. I know you will note I said *needs*, not *wants*.

I thank you for the letter I received from you and the note of encouragement in it to me in my ministry here at Ephesus. Such words and the knowledge that you are praying for me do mean so much. How we need to encourage each other and to pray for each other. That is the true spirit of sharing in the Lord's work, is it not?

You also speak of the passing days and how there just doesn't seem to be enough time to do what needs to be done. That set me to reflecting on this matter of time. Let me share with you some thoughts that came to me recently as I had opportunity to read the letter written by James, the brother of our Lord. He wrote it to "the twelve tribes scattered abroad" which I believe meant "to all of God's people who are scattered everywhere in the world." This letter came to our church in Ephesus recently and has made some of us really think of our ethical obligations as born-again Christians. But that is a subject for another time or letter.

To the thoughts, then, concerning time. James in his letter said, "For what is your life? It is a vapor or a mist which appears for a little while and then vanishes away." That made me stop and ask the question, what is my life? A mist that appears only for a little time? A little time—that suggests a flimsy, filmy substance.

But is that all time is? No, no. For when we stop to think of it, time is that solid, substantial thing for which I shall be held accountable when I come to that day of final reckoning, that day when the veil of time shall be drawn away and my Maker and I meet face to face in the eternities.

Then it will be that I shall see time for the vapor that it was—

... the wasted moments,
... the foolish things said and done,
when I could have been occupied in producing more substantial things which would last into eternity. Then I will see that where I took time for a solid here and now in worldly pursuits, those things were but a moving on to nothing

at the end. Oh, brother, there is no time-abiding satisfaction in pursuing the materialistic things of this world.

And yet time, vaporous as it may seem to be, can also be a solid entity. Think of it—

... seconds, minutes, hours,
... days, weeks, months,
... years, decades, centuries,
... milleniums, aeons, eternity.

In that period I live my span of life. What a period for service, solid service for others, substantial service for him who died for me.

Thus brother Epaphroditus, I am constrained to pray:

Oh Lord! help me to live each day that when time ends for me, it

will have been spent, not as a mist that passes away, but as a collection of diamonds put to work in the service of Thee, my Lord and my God!

I hear the "amens" from the brothers and the sisters in Christ. Let us be faithful to the crown of life which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award us on that day.

At last I have been moved to write a letter, not on the problems of church life, but on the matter of living "the life." The abiding blessing of the Holy Spirit be with you. Your brother in the faith,

Onesimus

Bishops' Column

continued from page 32

they are worshipping. Why do so few of us give more than 10 percent of our income to the Lord? What does this say about where our heart is and whether or not we truly worship the Lord or things?

In Matthew 6:19-34 and many other places, Jesus provides very clear teaching about the idolatry of possessions. It is disconcerting to think that with our increasing wealth, we are giving proportionately less to the Lord. A 1988 survey indicates that the poor of America actually give proportionately more to charity than those with a high income. According to Gallup, those earning less than \$10,000 gave 2.9 percent and those earning between \$75,000 and \$100,000 gave only 1.7 percent ("Non-Profit Times," Nov. 1988). If we were really dispossessed of our possessions, some of us could be giving 50 percent of our income to the Lord.

Young people starting a family or buying a house normally do not have the excess cash that many people 50 years or older may have. But habits have become ingrained to the extent that we think giving a tithe of our income or capital is pleasing to the Lord. Even when we sell our houses, businesses, and farms, how often does one simply "bank" the money, rather than making substan-

tial gifts to Cooperative Ministries and special needs?

As I look around my house (and we have no food processor, no VCR, no telephone answering machine) and compare my possessions to the majority of the people in this world, I must admit, "I possess too many things." Subtly, I am conned into thinking that "all these other things" are necessities.

We need to remember that Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Jesus seemed to be saying, "Idolatry is a basic attitude of the heart which manifests itself in our actions, attitudes, and possessions." The "pearl of great price" parable (Matthew 13:45-46) indicates there can be only one treasure, Jesus Christ. We cannot worship both God and mammon.

When we exercise less worship of "treasures on earth," we will have the freedom to release resources, "treasures in heaven," that can be well used in accomplishing the ministry of the kingdom of God on earth.

Harvey R. Sider is bishop of the Canadian Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.



Dialogue

Dear Phoebe,

I am glad you brought up the point about the "Doomsday mentality" in the March issue of the *Visitor*. I agree with you that much of the doom and gloom talk going around is unfocused and negative. I agree that we must look for the positive and rely on a faith in Jesus Christ to get us through the tough times. We should be energized by the positive. And, I would like to be able to say to my daughter, as you put it in your article, "... the world is a good place for their children."

But perhaps we are missing the point. The world is *not* a safe place, it is *not* going to be a good place for children and grandchildren, and there is a reason why things are getting so bad. I certainly want to be clear on this. I believe that we are living in a period of time foretold in Matthew 24:4-8. We are hearing of false christs (New Age theology and satanic rituals). We are experiencing "Wars,

rumors of wars," and "earthquakes in diverse places" (especially here in Southern California). And these things are only the beginning!

Anyone who spends only a little time with a Bible in one hand and a newspaper in another comes to the conclusion that we indeed are one of the last generations that will inhabit the earth as we know it. Prophecies and predictions are being fulfilled with sobering regularity. At risk of sounding like a doom-sayer, it is not going to get any better. In fact, we know it is going to get worse.

Matthew 24:9-14 gives us a picture of the world that I, my daughter, and her children (if the Lord allows) have to look forward to: being delivered up (imprisoned), killed, and hated.

So what should I be saying to my child? "I have hope that the world will be a good place for you"? No! Rather I should be teaching and pointing out to her, by example and the Word, that

Jesus is coming on clouds of glory; that no matter how bad it may get, Christ has prepared a place for us in Eternity; that she should be ready and equipped to face a world that is going to try to kill her and her children. I should be living a life that shows the power of the risen Lord in every aspect.

We of the church should be indicted by our complacency in allowing doomsday talk without preaching the truth. Jesus is talking to *us* in Matthew 24:36-44. We are drinking, eating and giving in marriage, not prepared for the coming of the Lord. In addition, Matthew 25:1-13 tells us a story (if we didn't understand the previous words in Matthew 24!) of the ten virgins. How many times do we need to be warned?

We do not want to emphasize the bad. We do not want to be negative. We do not want to offend anybody. But should we expect to get anything different than Jesus received? Are the servants greater than the Master? Who is going to tell the world what is really happening if we don't?

Let's focus our doomsday thinking instead of getting rid of it. Let's remember the reason why it is happening. Let's praise the God of Glory for the coming of his excellent Son, Jesus Christ. That is what we have to look forward to. That is what we should be watching for!

In the words of Revelation 22:20: "Surely I come quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Ray Bailey
Redlands, Calif.

Readers Respond

Thank you for the articles on child abuse as well as wife abuse which appeared in the February issue. It is one of several unpleasant subjects we need to face and would rather ignore. Thanks also for resisting the temptation to offer simplistic solutions. The problems of both abused and abuser need to be recognized and dealt with. You are to be commended for raising our consciousness level in this particular area.

Regarding Paul Hostetler's article in the same issue, I am bothered by his definition of agape love. I would like to offer an alternative: agape love is realizing that all people are First Class passengers and treating them that way until they realize it, too.

Even though the definition in the article is qualified at the end, a note of condescension toward our fellow man remains. If we do not believe all people are First Class passengers, our efforts to evangelize will be just so much "clanging brass and tinkling cymbals" to quote the King James version.

The fact is, the same price was paid for all of us when Jesus died on the

cross. There are no economy class passengers in God's eyes. Everyone has the same eternal value. That is why Jesus and the prodigal's father could respond as they did. They realized the people before them were First Class, even though the people themselves didn't realize it.

It is true that some people in our lives have not yet claimed their First Class tickets. Our task as Christians is to help them see that their way has been paid. We do that by seeing people as Jesus did. If every person is important enough for Jesus to die for him or her, they certainly should be of equal value to us. There is no room for condescension; there is only room for love.

Thanks again for the fine work you are doing in regard to our denominational magazine. I read every issue cover to cover, and you never fail to provide me with food for thought. May God continue to pour out his blessings upon you and your staff.

(Mrs.) Carolyn E. Pertusio
Annville, Pa.

Contributions Invited for Dialogue and Readers Respond

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

Since each article or letter represents the view of the writer, they do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Brethren in Christ Church.

After the consultation—now what?

Rod White

Since we were “consulting” and not “concluding” at the recent consultation on the Church and Public Policy (see pages 6, 7 & 8), I don’t feel secure enough to speak for many but myself when I try to discern what it all meant. But I know I can venture three thoughts that seemed important to me:

1) *Where we come from counts.* If we intend to affect our society and move the makers of public policy, we need to come from somewhere else but merely among them. We come from the church, where Christ is recognized as alive and reigning. We enter the battle with the powers that dominate our world with “an unshakable commitment to Jesus’ counter-cultural values” (Ron Sider). We should not cheapen our separation from the world by seeing it as merely a way to stay unstained by it. We are separate because we are a new creation. We “go into all the world” as reconciled reconcilers (2 Cor. 5:17-18). I come away from the consultation convinced that our spiritual ancestors were right about separating. It is left to us to take on separation’s positive purpose as we make our way through the world and as we work to make the largest impact we can for Christ as we do.

2) *We need to organize more dialogue.* It was certainly a pleasure to be with the astute people who came to the consultation. But it was apparent that the issues under discussion were far from common issues discussed in our congregations. Some predicted vast disagreement

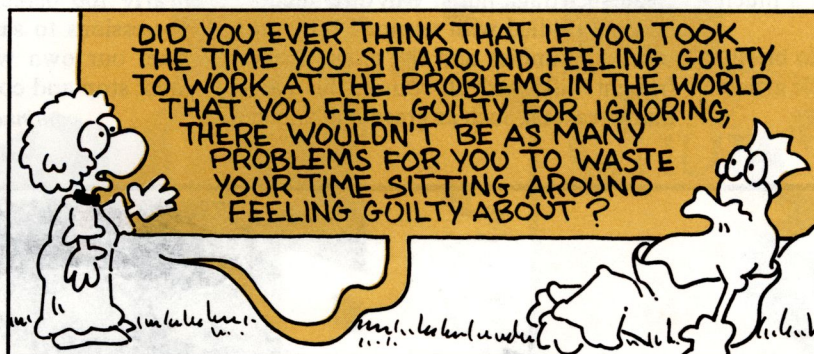
between those consulting and those in our churches. I don’t know about that, because we haven’t talked it over; as a brotherhood, we ought to. It is part of our genius to engage in dialogue and let the Spirit do his work in our communities of faith gathered around the Scripture. I think the Board for Brotherhood Concerns should create a network through its regional boards that seeks to have a group or representative in every church committed to dialogue and action concerning the issues raised at the consultation—especially peacemaking, social action and our historic Anabaptist distinctives that make us communities with kingdom values.

3) *We should make some decisions.* I got the feeling that we were a little discouraged about our lack of church growth and impact as Brethren in Christ. I think one reason for that lack may be our ambivalence about who we are. Some “old line” brethren seem to think our Anabaptist/Pietistic/Holiness heritage is passé and people in the 1990s won’t buy it. But at the same time, we are not too adept at or committed to “evangelical” ways, either. I think we should decide to bring the strengths of our past into the present. Discipleship, community, non-resistant love, heart-felt faith, life based on simple adherence to Scripture, and seeking for the fullness of the Spirit are not only “marketable” in the 1990s, they are desperately needed. We have a wonderful synthesis. I hope we will refine it, define it, and export it instead of losing what the Lord has built among us because we are too insecure to choose it.

Rod White pastors the Riverside congregation in Riverside, CA.

Pontius Puddle

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting “Pontius Puddle” from the Visitor must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffmann, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.



Bishops' Column

Christian idolatry

by Harvery R. Sider

What a contradiction! An oxymoron?

You will argue, correctly, that Christians cannot be idol worshippers! Could it be, however, that we seek to worship both God and our "idols" (2 Kings 17:33)?

Several years ago, Dr. Bob Goudzwaard, a professor of economics in the Free University of Amsterdam, authored a book, *Idols of Our Times*. Covering the jacket were a mammoth computer, a missile, and a bionic man standing on top of a subdued world.

Howard Snyder, in the foreword, wrote, "Goudzwaard is right. . . . To an alarming degree, Christians are idolaters. As the author carefully shows, the goals of prosperity, security, might, and nation have all the classical marks of an ideology. Thus, they have become our gods" (p. 7).

Christians are not intentionally idolatrous. But since the temptation of trying to worship both God and our own priorities is so subtle, we need to be alert to the danger of inadvertently slipping into idolatry.

Christians tend to be selective in our allegiance to God and one or more of the many modern gods. Our lifestyles often betray our priorities and, ultimately, what we worship. We become enthralled with such things as a spirit of individualism and independence; consumerism; ease and leisure; and a drift toward dependence on the power of politics. These are symbolic of a much longer list of potential "idols."

Space permits opportunity to briefly address the first two only. A later article will address the latter two.

Individualism and Independence

The individualistic, entrepreneurial spirit of our western culture, which glorifies a strong and independent attitude, has infected the church. We tend to worship success, regardless of how it is achieved. Church growth, excellence in ministry, and "success" are all wonderful, but when gained at the expense of someone else or a lack of accountability, we are well on our way to worshipping the ideology of independence.

An attitude of insubordination affects the Christian in many ways. One of the more significant and damaging aspects is "self-glory." We tend to place self above others and/or God. *My* thoughts make it difficult to comprehend that another may hold part of the truth. This can even lead to failure to hear the voice of God. Self-delusion becomes a god.

Paul instructs us to submit ourselves to one another out of reverence for Christ (Eph. 5:21). How opposite to placing myself on a pedestal! One of the major platforms of our heritage has been the high priority of accepting counsel from our brothers and sisters.

The strongest of leaders have always submitted to counsel. Moses received advice from Jethro and became a much better leader for having done so. Peter accepted Paul's rebuke for becoming narrow-minded. Strong leadership welcomes and knows the value of accountability. We dare not confuse strength of leadership with an individualistic philosophy of ministry.

Normally, we don't associate the spirit of independence with idolatry. But the effects point in that direction and invade the home, the church, the community, and the world. Why do spouses, once happily married, separate, divorce, and create such tragic hurts? Why do churches become riddled with tension? Why are our communities and the global scene fraught with war? Of course, there are many reasons, such as greed and anger,

but, even behind these causes, may be the underlying principle of self-worship. *My* ideas, *my* rights, *my* ways must be promoted and advanced. This is idolatry. If we begin to perceive that there is a lack of compassion, a resistance to dialogue with others, an inability to "hear" what another is saying or to accept advice, whether in the home or the church, it may be time to ask the Lord, "Am I practicing idolatry by insisting on *my* ideas, *my* rights, *my* ways?"

God calls his people to the path of mutuality, sharing, openness, humility and confession, and not self-aggrandizement and self-worship. Such a life involves amenability to one another, rather than fighting for one's rights.

Consumerism

No Christian intentionally or overtly worships cars, homes, televisions, VCR's, and bank accounts. Nor is there anything wrong with material possessions, as long as they don't possess us. At the same time, gadgets have become "essentials" for daily living. Fancy food processors, computers, the best sound systems, and hundreds of other "things" are to be found in our homes. A recent article in *Christianity Today* calls this "the torrid American love affair with gadgetry." The same article indicates that 79 percent of those polled couldn't live without a microwave oven and 49 percent couldn't survive without a telephone answering machine (*Christianity Today*, April 21, 1989, p. 13). In spite of all this, we have convinced ourselves that we do not worship these "things."

There is, indeed, a subtle undercurrent about the need for the "new necessities" which smacks of idolatry.

When our priorities lead us to spend nearly 100 percent of our income on possessions to satisfy ourselves and to meet our own wants, then Christians must stop and consider what or whom

continued on page 29